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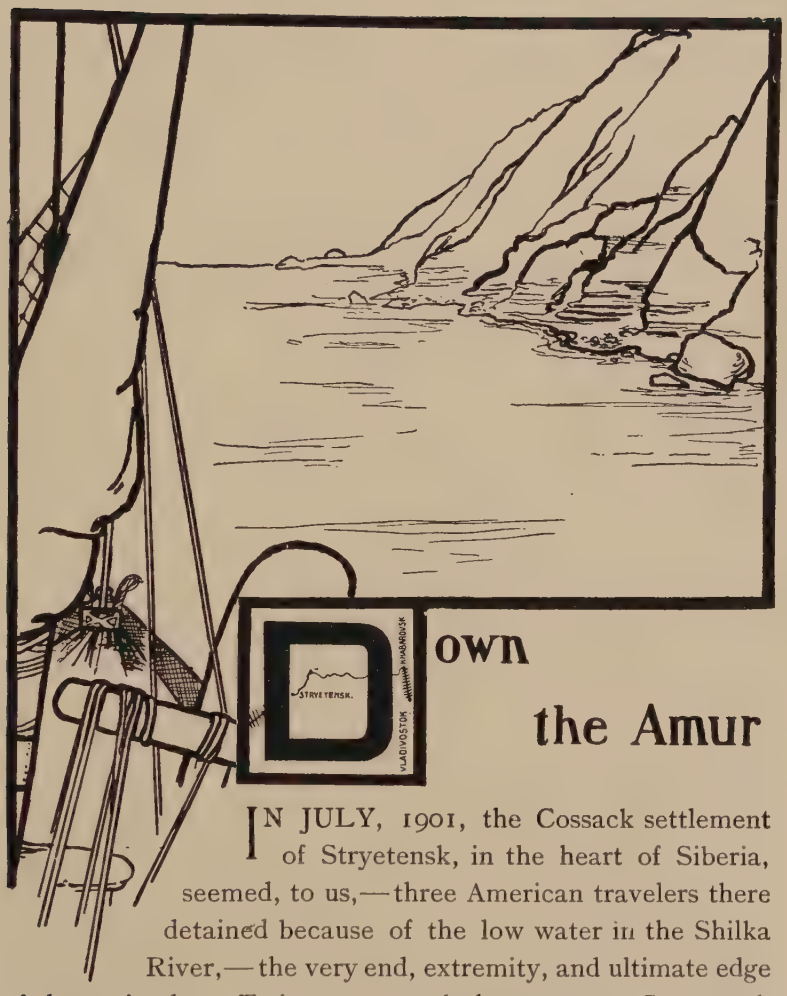
DOWN THE AMUR



Down the Amur

IN JULY, 1901, the Cossack settlement of Stryetensk, in the heart of Siberia, seemed, to us,—three American travelers there detained because of the low water in the Shilka River,—the very end, extremity, and ultimate edge of the antipodes. Twice every week there come to Stryetensk groups of trans-continental travelers who have journeyed from Moscow to Irkutsk in the famous Trans-Siberian Express, crossed Lake Baikal in the wake of the ice-breaking ferry, and

worried over a thousand versts of Trans-Baikalia in a train to which even strained courtesy could not give the name of "accommodation." The limit of speed is fifteen miles an hour for the Express, and for the other train ten miles an hour, if all is going well. Even thus, Stryetensk is less than two weeks east of Moscow — nine days in comfort, without change of cars to Irkutsk, half a day of transfers and tribulations on the Baikal branch, from Irkutsk to the pier where the great ferry waits; half a day on the icy waters of the "Baikal Sea"; half a night of waiting at the port of Myssovaya, and then three days and nights in the Trans-Baikal train to Stryetensk. All this is merely provisional, pending the completion of the Manchurian line and the perfecting of the pier arrangements at the two lake terminals,— Baikal and Myssovaya. But thus it was that we came to Stryetensk in July, 1901. Easy to get to — given time and patience — is that settlement upon the banks of the Shilka River, but not easy to get away from, as we learned even

ON A "PLOTT"

THE S. S. "ASIA"

before we reached it. Rumors of low water and suspended traffic had come to our ears while at Irkutsk. We find these rumors but too well founded. The river appears shrunken, its shallow waters tearing nervously down their too broad channel as if in fear of being left stranded high and dry! The last regular Post-Steamer has been gone three days,—the next is grounded somewhere many miles below and may not get up to Stryetensk until autumn. Scores of fellow-travelers are literally "camping out" in the corridors of the inadequate inns, and hundreds of emigrants are sitting in disconsolate discomfort on the shore—waiting for something to turn up. Fortunately, we are favored in this extremity by the cheery companionship and linguistic aid of our devoted and indefatigable Professor, a geographical savant from St. Petersburg. With him as our guest we have duly celebrated the Fourth of July in feasting at the inn, and over our coffee we discuss the feasibility of making the down-river trip—a run of a mere thousand miles or so, on a raft or "*plott*"

A PRIVATE "YACHT"

which we are to beg, borrow, or build, if needs be. To our subsequent regret the "plott" plan was not adopted. In fact, it was forgotten in the excitement occasioned by the discovery that the good ship "Rurik," a sad old corpse of a steamer,

THE "RURIK"

had been resurrected and would attempt the impossible voyage down the Shilka as far as its junction with the Argun.

The "Rurik" appears to lack every qualification usually deemed essential in a steamboat, but she *draws only two feet of water.* She can glide or drift where other boats strand or stick, and to the "Rurik" we confide our twenty-seven pieces of baggage and our four selves. The trunks are stowed away in the damp leaky hold, where they serve as cots and couches for sundry fellow-passengers. There is one first-class cabin,—eight by ten feet, in which are five bunks and a dining-table.

We secure one corner of the table and one of the bunks, each of us, according to agreement, having a quarter interest in that one bunk on rainy nights; at other times we are to sleep as third-class passengers on the deck. The four other berths are occupied by a middle-aged married couple, and a very young and very affectionate bride and groom who, we subsequently discover, are on their wedding journey.

We endeavored to arrange with the Captain for the exclusive use of a part of the forward deck, where we might spread out our belongings and make ourselves as comfortable as possible. But this was found to be impracticable. As the commander explained, the deck is not always tenable, owing to the fact that the ship is propelled by a "machine of

FINAL PURCHASES

high pressure," throwing incandescent cinders with Vesuvian energy. So proud was he of that "machine of high pressure" that he never missed an opportunity of making it manifest its eruptive powers — invariably driving all hands to cover. Therefore we became, as it were, nomads on the decks of the "Rurik," camping wherever the volcanic hail was gentlest, and in event of fiercer outbursts, even seeking shelter in the musty hold. Our pretensions to exclusiveness soon gave way before the kindly courtesy of our fellow-passengers, and by the second evening out a spirit of "*camaraderie*" had broken down class-barriers, and the first-, second-, third-, and fourth-class passengers overran one another's quarters, becoming friends and fellows, united by the common terror of the "machine of high pressure" and, by the common aspiration toward a speedy arrival at

THE ACTOR

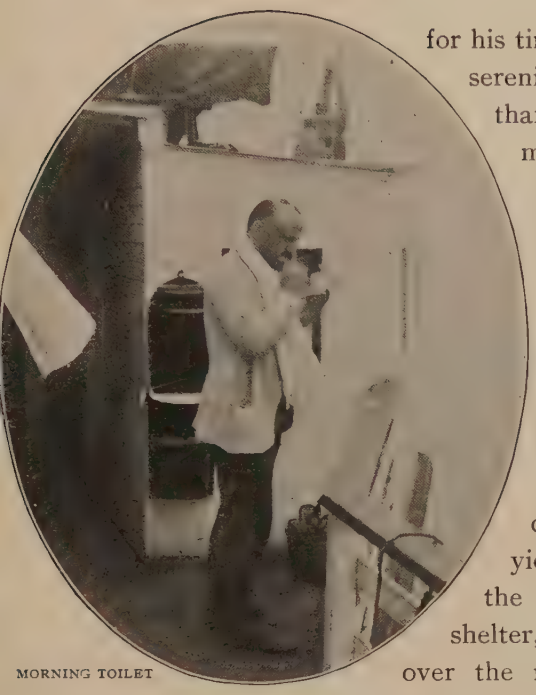
FELLOW-PASSENGERS

Pokrovka. Pokrovka is a village just below the point where the Shilka meets the Argun, these two rivers forming the Amur. At Pokrovka we are to find deeper water and the regular steamers of the postal-line.

Meantime, life on the "Rurik" is not half so dull as it might be. To be pitied are the people who travel on private yachts,—they have no food for study in the way of fellow-passengers. A volume could be filled with an account of the doings of our little world, compactly stowed between and on the "Rurik's" decks. We are glad to have known them all, those kindly, courteous, patient, and good-humored folk. We are thankful for the beauty of the delicate, dark little bride; it was a pleasure to have her there to look at, to see her smile at *him*, to know that happiness sailed with us on the "Rurik." We shall always recall with pleasure the example of maturer marital felicity afforded by the other kindly pair, nor shall we forget the Thespians of our ship's company, the soubrette, with her coquettish touches of rouge, so sadly out

of tune with the gray dawn of those Siberian mornings, and the comedian, with his stagy antics—so amusingly incongruous on the deck. We owe a debt of gratitude to the hundred, more or less, of sober, self-sacrificing, uncomplaining settlers, colonists, or emigrants, poor folk in family groups of six and eight, for their examples of good-temper and philosophic facing of discomforts. And above all we are grateful to the Professor for his unselfish devotion, for his interpretations,

THE PRETTY BRIDE



MORNING TOILET

for his tinned soups, and for his edifying serenity. Nor must I omit words of thanks to the two companions of my travels, for the many things that I shall not set down, and for their skill in preparing respectively the oatmeal porridge and the strong black coffee that daily cheered the chill hour of waking on the fog-soaked decks of the "Rurik."

We slept on mats of pressed cattle-hair, only a trifle less unyielding than the wet planks of the deck. Sometimes we rigged a shelter, spreading an old tarpaulin over the railings on the bridge; but through the holes in that improvised tent the rain and cinders were sure to find their way. We were usually awakened by one or the other, or by the wind that began

"BREAKFAST IS READY!"

THE CUISINE

to tug at our covers as soon as the "Rurik" got under way in the morning, after her usual all-night rest, tied up to the bank near a friendly wood-pile. The Shilka steamers always tie up for the night, navigation after dark being out of the question on this uncertain stream. One evening halt is very like another. There is but little difference in the places and the incidents. No sooner is the gang-plank out than all hands rush ashore with towels and soap to bathe in the refreshing waters of the Shilka, women upstream, men downstream, and children all along the shore. Then bon-fires are built, and pipes are smoked, and stories are told. The hardworked crew meantime demolish huge wood-piles and heap upon the decks the wherewithal to feed the insatiate maw of the "Rurik" on the morrow. Sometimes the rigging of the plank is no facile thing, especially when the

SETTLERS

boat must moor in the shallow but swift water some distance from the shore. Then two planks are required, precariously

THE FIRST STOP

supported midway by a portable wooden pier like a big carpenter's horse. But no difficulties daunt the husky crew of which the Chinese member is the most skilful and active and indefatigable. They all worked well, but the pig-tailed "Kitaiski" was worth in actual results three of the brawny "Russkis." By day we steamed with cautious deliberation

"WOODING UP"

down the shallow stream, following with difficulty the uncertain channel, grating our keel on the newly formed gravel bars, but happily escaping mishap until the second afternoon when, grounding firmly, we remained for eighteen hours in mid-stream. Meantime a rival craft that had left Stryetensk twelve hours later than the "Rurik," went puffing past us triumphantly. The muggy heat was oppressive and the flies

A FLOATING EMPORIUM

fearfully insistent, and, bulky and crustaceous as beetles, would dart at us, plunge a fang into the flesh, and buzz away again with a sound like that of a receding automobile. After escaping from this plight, the Captain was even more careful in making soundings. Three sailors are stationed in the bow, two of them plunging long poles into the stream, almost invariably striking bottom and at the instant crying

LANDING THE GANG-PLANK

out the measure, "Three feet,—three and a half,—four,—four,—two and a half,"—or, as they sing it; "*Tre—tre s'polovinoi — cheteria — cheteria — dva s'polovinoi.*" And at "*dva s'polovinoi*" we slow down, and at "*dva*," or "two" we are pretty sure to stick. They call this "sitting on a *perricatt.*" We sit on every perricatt that humps its gravelly back between the shaggy banks of the Shilka, sometimes remaining for an hour, sometimes for a

day and a half. First, efforts are made to force the boat over the bar by means of poles and pulleys. These efforts are always unavailing. Then the anchor is carried ashore and buried, ropes are rigged, and all hands man the winch and circle madly round until either the boat or the anchor yields to the strain. The anchor usually gives up first, whereupon the difficult job must be done all over again.

PASSING A "PERRICATT"

Sometimes during these delays we manage to get ashore in a small boat. The ladies do their laundry work along the bank, and the men build bonfires to dispel the gloom created by the pall of smoke from burning forests that overspread this region. This smoky fog lends the charm of mystery to our journey down the Shilka. Out of the smoke there came one day a floating emporium — a department-store on a plott, and thereupon all hands scrambled upon the raft at the risk

TAKING SOUNDINGS

of sinking it, and, rummaging over the diversified stock, "shopped" for an hour or more.

SITTING ON A "PERRICATT"

SIGNALING

An interesting incident marked another day, as we were steaming downstream in this haze. Since leaving Moscow we had been on the *qui vive* to encounter the San Francisco

WORKING THE WINCH

THE "RURIK" ON THE SHALLOW SHILKA

school-boy and his journalistic companion, sent out to run around the world by one of the American newspapers. No signs of them, until at noon on July 8, as we rounded a bend two hundred versts below Stryetensk we saw three figures

THE RUSSO-AMERICAN LAUNDRY

dimly outlined on the bank. Instantly we recognized the poet-journalist, the Western school-boy, and their guide. We shouted and waved frantically; they replied; and then without wasting precious moments resumed their task of towing a baggage-laden skiff along the stony shore. We learned, later on, that they had abandoned their "perricatted" steamer, and started to foot it all the way to the first railway station, more than a hundred miles upstream. Warned by their fate, our captain hits upon a clever scheme to get his boat past the perricatt on which their boat has been sitting obstinately for several days.

A RIVER NYMPH

IN THE FOG

"WILL SHE GET OVER?"

He orders all hands ashore to lighten ship. A hundred of us are scattered along the bank watching with anxious eagerness for the result of the attempt to cross the bar. Down through the fog comes the "Rurik," panting as with suppressed excitement. She glides behind the other boat, sitting there on the perricatt, then we hear her throbs grow heavier and faster and then—see her sweep out into deep water with a shriek of triumph which is echoed by the happy passengers along the shore.

A RANGE LIGHT

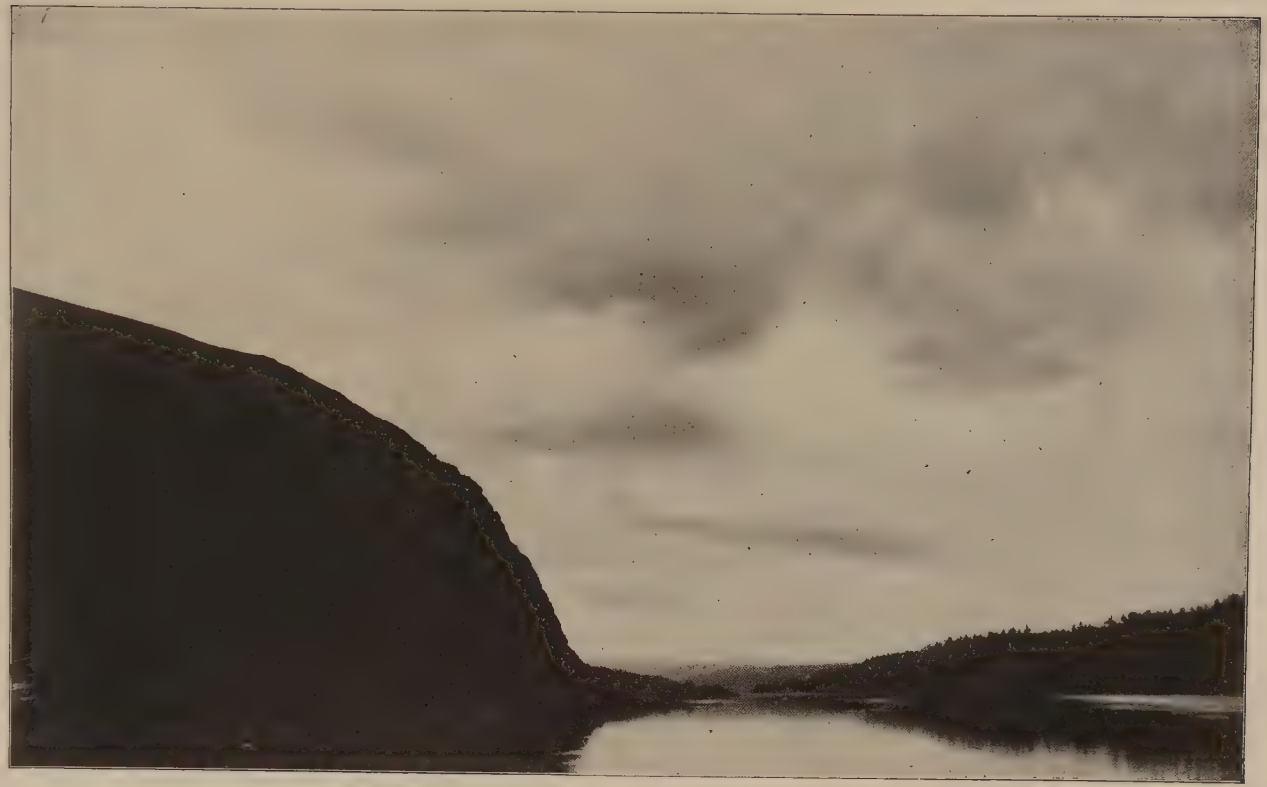
But to regain the "Rurik" we must make an Alpine ascent, for the only place where she dares to approach the shore is at the base of a tall cliff, around which there is no path. It therefore behooves us to climb right over the cliff, and half an hour later we are on the summit. A merrier lot of climbers never reached a more inviting height. Prisoners so long on the congested decks, we find a keen pleasure in

looking down upon the "Rurik" as she glides around the point. It is delicious to breathe the mountain air, drink in the grandeur of the scenery, and rise superior to the cinders, the flies, and the heat, and the other petty torments of navigation on the Shilka. We drink also draughts of most delicious water, for our companions find a spring, which

"HOORAY!"

affords the first, and only, cool refreshing drink that we have had in all Siberia. Siberia being a "land of ice," we had forgotten that there is such a thing as ice in all the world, until reminded by the welcome chilliness of the water of that nameless spring hidden away on the banks of the river!

Laden with wild flowers plucked on this steep descent, we again embark, physically tired, but delighted and refreshed by our unexpected experiences upon the cliff tops of the Shilka. To enhance our content and satisfaction we overtake and pass the haughty post-boat which left Stryetensk three days in advance of the "Rurik." We had been more



THE LORDLY AMUR

than human had we not jeered in triumph at our friends on the official boat, who regarded us as consigned to the upper Shilka ports for a long period. But owing to our lighter draught we are first to pass the buoy that marks the spot where the Shilka meets the Argun. The two rivers, confounded in a watery embrace, lose their identity, and by virtue of their mutual absorption become the mighty Amur, the great water-way to the Pacific.

ON THE CLIFF

But all this is seen through a thick veil of smoke, beyond which, however, we occasionally distinguish the tall pine forests of Manchuria, for we are now upon the northern edge of China. We touched the southeast edge of China at Canton and Hongkong, two years ago. How different the approach—then a huge trans-Pacific liner, a splendid English seaport, now the rattle-trap old "Rurik," and a wilderness. But in the foreground, here as there, stand figures typical of China, for on our deck are pigtailed Celestials, clad in blue, with the sweat of toil upon their brows, and the instinct and habit of industry, as their inheritance.

Meantime the sounder sings the song, "*Tre, dva s'polovinoi,*" and then comes a crunch, a grinding of gravel under

ON THE SLOPE

the keel, and we are firmly seated on our eleventh perricatt, while the official post-boat is towed by in triumph. One of our crew steps overboard, for the water comes only to his knees, and wanders around in search of the lost channel. It is found some minutes later, and we reach the village of

LOOKING DOWN-STREAM

Pokrovka almost simultaneously with the rival craft, despite its three days' start. Pokrovka is not a cheerful place. We felt at Stryetensk that we had reached the limit of the habitable world; that there we had seen and crossed the hump upon the other side of our big earth; that we were beginning the downward portion of our trip. But experiences on the Shilka proved that our path was still uphill; while Pokrovka — I love to dwell upon the word, we had so often murmured it in waking dreams as the name of some distant paradise that we might reach some day if we were very good and very fortunate — Pokrovka, I say, exists merely to prove that Stryetensk is not the limit, not the last, farthest, and most hopeless place of earth; that it does not mark, in a gastronomic and

OFF THE EDGE OF CHINA

sybaritish sense, the antipodes of the Waldorf-Astoria. And here at this end-of-all-things we are compelled to quit the "Rurik," for she, with her light draught, finds it more profitable to navigate the shallows of the upper Shilka than to venture below.

But there is gaiety even in Pokrovka, for a tribe of gypsies are encamped near the boat-landing. They do their best to lift the gloom, atmospheric and actual, in which Pokrovka

LOOKING FOR THE CHANNEL

AT POKROVKA

THE WATER BULLETIN AT POKROVKA

and its unhappy stranded population have been plunged by a superabundance of fire in the forest, and a record-breaking lack of water in the river. The great bulletin-board set high on the bank tells of low water below as well as above the village. Seven or eight hundred people are congregated along the banks. There are no inns, and the few houses of the villagers are full to overflowing, while the shops are empty — stripped of all things edible.

STRANDED

We could not buy even rice or sugar; tea and tobacco were the only staples left in stock. Army-officers, some of them accompanied by their wives, are in an even sadder plight than the rough mujiks, who are accustomed to fasting and exposure.

GYPSIES

But thanks to the lucky star that follows us even through the Siberian fogs, we glide away next morning from all this dimness and uncertainty, for friends upon the post-boat unselfishly make room for us in their cabins. I say "friends," for such they were in fact, although our acquaintance dates only from the railway journey. They were Russian civil-officers "*chinovniks*," two in the diplomatic service, bound for Peking and Tokio, one a titled emissary of the Interior Department. We should have been content to sleep upon the roof abaft the wheelhouse with the score of emigrants who could not find space between the decks.

Anything to get away from Pokrovka! Yet as the village vanishes in the smoky haze, we cast regretful glances at the faithful little "Rurik." As she, too, fades from view, we are conscious of our ingratitude, for among her one hundred passengers, of various classes, we felt that we counted just a hundred faithful friends, whom we have faithlessly forsaken at the first chance of escape.

Another voyage of uncertain length has now begun. Our boat, the "Aurora," is simply a barge with no power of her own, in which we are to be towed downstream some seven hundred miles to Blagoveschensk — where all troubles are to end; for

WAITING

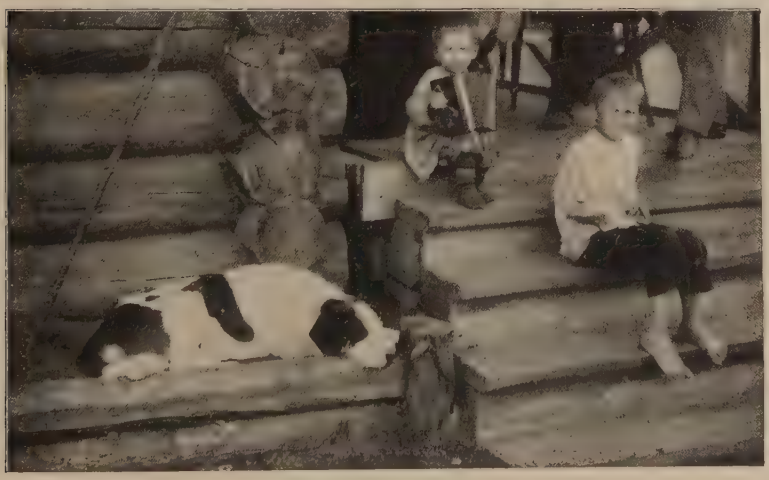
Blagoveschensk marks the limit of low water, and there the splendid deep-draught boats are said to be in waiting. Therefore it is to Blagoveschensk that we now look forward. Blagoveschensk becomes to us what Pokrovka had been to us during the Shilka trip, a paradise to be attained in some

AN EMPTY SHOP

NO BREAD FOR SALE

TELEGRAPH STATION

distant future,—how dim and distant we little dream as our sturdy tow-tug, the "Admiral Possiet," turning her wheels with exasperating lentitude, drags us around curve after curve, gliding from bank to bank to swing herself and us free from the perricatts that lie in wait for careless keels. Never was so monotonous a trip so full of incident and interest. Do we grow weary of the endless



MUSIC HATH CHARMS

LEAVING POKROVKA

curves and palisades?—the fates provide distraction. There comes a warning cry from the captain of the tow, and in an

THE LARGE "AURORA"

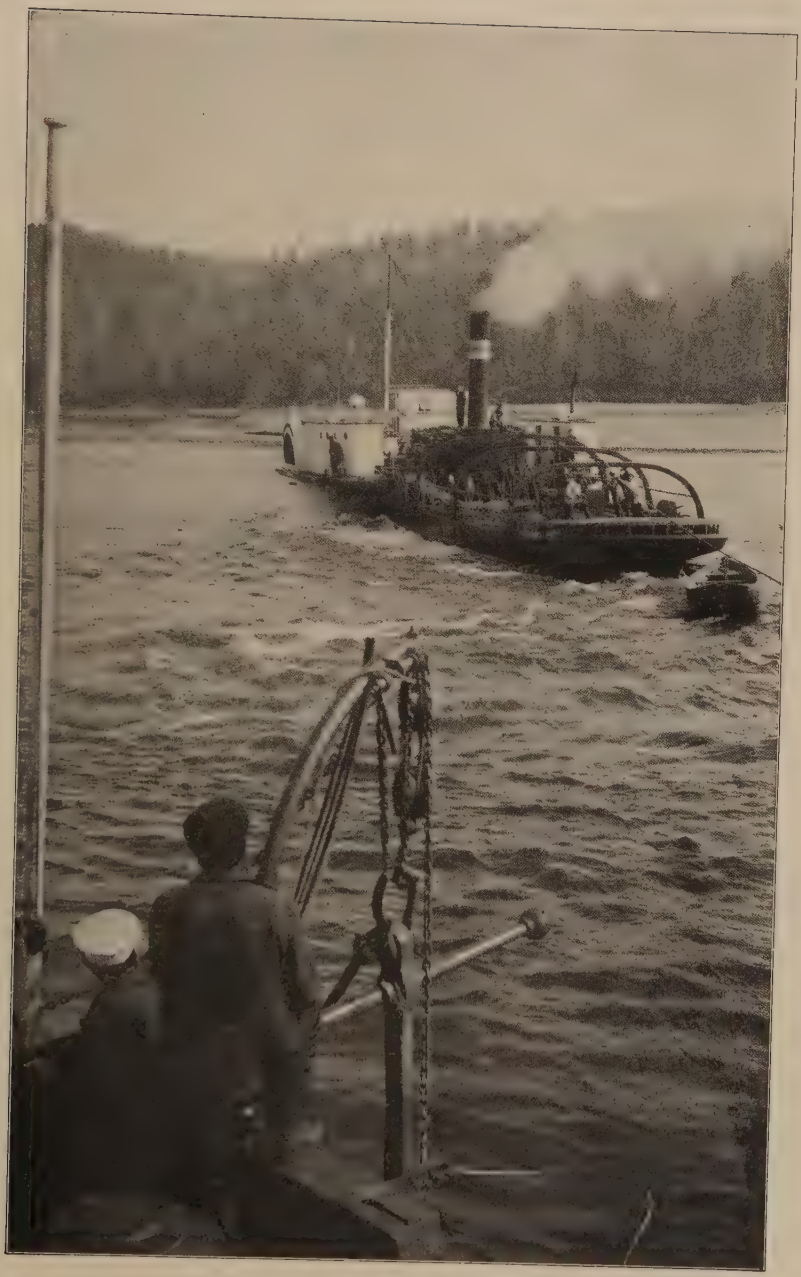
FOLLOWING THE TOW

instant all is excitement and confusion. The Admiral Possiet has grounded in mid-stream — and after making vain efforts to propel herself over the perricatt, vomiting tons of water from her paddle-boxes, she has swung across the channel, blocking the path of our big heavy barge, which, carried on by her

THE TOW-BOAT

AN IMPENDING CATASTROPHE

AN ANXIOUS MOMENT



THE TOW-BOAT GROUNDING

WEARY HOURS

momentum, and aided by the current, threatens to strike the "Admiral" amidships and cut her square in two. Four times this same thing happened, but the threatened crash was always avoided by quick work, and some startling freak of luck. I am not superstitious, but it really seemed as if my camera were a

ORIENTAL RESIGNATION

talisman, for the pressing of its button apparently averted many an impending catastrophe. "Click!" it would go at the most critical moment, and promptly the "Aurora" would swerve a little, as the "Admiral" would swing a few feet more, and we would find our barge unharmed, and either helplessly adrift in the swift stream or seated safely upon some kindly perricatt. Then would follow hours and sometimes days of labor and delay. First the tow-boat must be released, then she passes hawsers and steel cables to the barge and tries to yank us adrift. From morn till night the "Admiral" yanks and yanks in vain at the "Aurora," shaking us up at every "yank," breaking hawsers, snapping cables, but always failing to budge the bow, or to shift the stern, until it

FIVE O'CLOCK "CHAI"

seems as if the barge had taken root and must remain forever. All this of course is exasperating to the four impatient Americans on board, but to the Russians these delays are merely the expected incidents of travel. *We* try to take command and tell the captain what to do next to extricate

GOING ASHORE

us; *they* gather round the samovar, and to the music of its vapory song forget that they are stranded in the Amur. Among our fellow-passengers are two generals and several officers of lower rank, and quartered on the deck are several cossacks whom the officers treat with a hearty familiarity that does not breed contempt but on the contrary wins the respectful affection of the men. One of the lieutenants would frequently borrow our little motion-picture machine, the "Kinora," saying, "I want my children to see the pictures, too"; and would stand at the window manipulating the instrument until all his overgrown infants had looked with astonished eyes into the magic box.

COSSACKS WITH THE KINORA

Thus pass the days; long periods of immobile monotony, broken by short runs, as far as the next wood-pile or post-station. We begin to hate the sight of corded wood, for invariably it means a long delay; while the announcement that arrival at a post-station is imminent is hailed with sighs,

THE COUNT AND THE COSSACKS

THE POSTMASTER

ON A "PERRICATT"

for the exchange of mail-bags in Siberia is a matter of grave import, calling for at least two precious hours. Then one fine day we moor to the Manchurian shore and make no

ARRIVAL AT A POST-STATION

effort to proceed. No Russian asks the reason why — but finally American inquiries bring out the fact that a bad perricatt is just below, and that the captain has resolved to wait for the river to rise six full inches. We plant stakes near the shore to measure the expected rise. Next morning the water had risen three eighths of an inch, according to one stake, but a fall of half an inch is recorded by the other.

While figuring on the prospective period of delay, which may extend even to a fortnight, we hear the plash of oars and — behold! — a boat that can defy all perricatts touches the shore! It is a crude rowboat manned by three rough-looking oarsmen. A council of war is held; Blagoveschensk is still five hundred miles away; the current flows sixty miles

LATE AFTERNOON

a day, and with three oars we can cover a hundred miles a day. After a parley the boatmen agree to take us and our baggage for sixty rubles. We are aided in making this bargain not only by the Professor, but also by a disinterested Polish fellow-passenger who helps make the proposition clear to the boatmen. In fact, the Polish gentleman leads the men aside, talking earnestly to them, wishing to make the details of the contract clear and plain. Meantime, happy at the thought of liberty, we strip and plunge into the river for a swim.

Still, vaguely suspicious of the exaggerated courtesy of the gentleman from Warsaw, I suggest to the Professor that possibly the Pole is trying to secure the boat for himself. "Oh, no! I cannot admit the thought," is the reply in a tone of mild rebuke. Presently, back come the boatmen, and in great haste they cast loose and start upstream toward the barge. To our protesting cries they answer that the Polish gentleman has offered them five rubles more than

EVENING

A MEANS OF ESCAPE

we, and that they have accepted his offer and agreed to convey him and his baggage to Blagoveschensk. Indignant at this underhand proceeding, we offer to treble the remuneration. But in vain; for the courteous and clever Polish gentleman has secured the passports of the three men, who, deprived of their papers, are quite helpless, for no Russian subject dares to move without his official documents of identification. Dressing in haste, we reach the "Aurora" in time to see the polite Pole lowering his luggage into the boat he has so craftily chartered. We stand upon the bank in

"I THINK SO, TOO"

impotent anger, hurling sarcastic phrases in French at the departing Chesterfield who responds with courteous smiles and salutations. With exquisite politeness, he declines the gift of our luncheon basket, mockingly proffered him. Finally, with a leer of triumph, the Pole vanishes in the smoky haze.

The story flies from mouth to mouth and provokes warm discussions. Some think the Pole has acted cleverly within

HEGIRA OF THE POLISH GENTLEMAN

his rights, others condemn him as a hypocritical deceiver, while the pained Professor is obliged at last to "admit the thought." All are at a loss to understand the sarcastic courtesy with which we saw him off. "Why," asks the Count, "did you salute him and wish him 'bon voyage,' and offer him your basket? He had done nothing kind to you?" We had our revenge on the morrow. The perricatt was passed successfully, and when we overtook the Polish

TALKING IT OVER

gentleman, our captain, who possessed a sense of justice, refused to let him board the barge again, leaving him to struggle downstream against a strong head-wind. But he laughs best who laughs last. and the Pole was continually

THE POLE IS REFUSED PASSAGE BY THE CAPTAIN

GETTING ASHORE TO MAKE A MOTION-PICTURE

laughing. He reached Blagoveschensk forty-eight hours ahead of us, for the day following his rejection we met another post-boat, the "Admiral Putyatin," and thereby

PICTURESQUE PASSENGERS

hangs another tale of mismanagement, vexation, and delay. The "Admiral Putyatin" has been moored near a woodpile for just two weeks and three days! Seventeen suns have risen and set since she first stopped, ostensibly to take on wood. Two hundred people have sat and waited patiently for the Amur to rise. The neighboring village has been eaten

THE "ADMIRAL PUTYATIN"

out of house and home, the last loaf of bread and the last string of Siberian pretzels have been purchased. No one has thought of telegraphing a complaint to the administration for sending out a boat with a three and one-half foot draught to ascend a river two feet deep. It is not the Russian way. It is not considered good form to criticize anything. The

OUR OFFICIAL FELLOW-PASSENGERS

proper attitude is one of absolute indifference, the proper thing to say is "*Nitchevo.*" The word means literally "nothing," and yet it means everything. It sounds the keynote of the Russian character — "nitchevo." There's

IN A COSSACK VILLAGE

THE LAST LOAVES OF BREAD

nothing to be done. Nothing is wrong. Nobody is to blame. What's the use of bothering? It will be all the same in a thousand years. "Nitchèvo." Our captain moors his tow-boat and barge alongside and calmly proceeds to drink tea, and murmurs "nitchevo" with the other captain. After waiting thirty-six hours longer for telegraphic instructions from one of the officials

GOOD ADVICE

not more than a hundred miles away, the captains finally decide to do the very thing that the all-wise Americans had been advising from the very first. They transpose the two lots of

THE LAST STRING OF PRETZELS

POLING

passengers. We take the "Putyatin" to continue downstream. The "Putyatin" people will try their luck upstream upon our barge which is of lighter draught.

But in what confusion is this change effected! Two mobs of two hundred people each—trying to carry tons of baggage from boat to boat over a single, narrow, rail-less gangway. After it was all over, a second gangway was put

OUR SLEEPING ACCOMMODATIONS

across. The wonder is that half of us were not pushed overboard during the rush and crush of transfer, for there was no system, no order, just a hopeless, frantic struggle to secure the best places on the other boat. We emerged from the double stampede so exhausted that we never thought to find fault with the accommodations that had fallen to our lot. There were only half the necessary number of cabins, and as a consequence

THE CAPTAIN AND THE CIGARETTE

"NITCHEVO"

we found ourselves again reduced to the rank of third-class deck-passengers, and on the open deck we lived and cooked and ate and slept, unmindful of the sun by day or of the chilling fogs by night — happy to have a place to lay our heads.

Delays are still our portion, and if it be not a perricatt, it is a woodpile

MR. "NITCHEVO"

THE BURNING MOUNTAIN

or a post-port that consumes time and patience. Our new captain, daintily arrayed in a suit of yellow silk, is distressingly gentle for a sailor. When aught goes wrong, he grips his cigarette-box firmly and orders a glass of tea. I fear that we became a trifle ill-humored and disposed to ridicule Russian methods, contrasting them unfavorably with American ways of doing things. We began to find fault with everything, usually voicing our criticisms in the

SMOLDERING CLIFFS

hearing of a kindly, courteous, old gentleman whom we had nicknamed "Mr. Nitchevo." He was the typical Siberian man of affairs, a prominent citizen of Irkutsk, and, so it was rumored, a part-owner of this steamboat-line, the management of which appeared to us inexcusably incompetent. He had traveled in America, but averred that he did not care for our fast trains. "When I travel, I like to employ plenty of time," is his only defense of his attitude.

One day we spoke harshly of some inexcusably slow transfer. Mr. Nitchevo protested with these words:

"Remember, gentlemen, it takes as much time as it requires."

"Yes," my friend replied, "but it doesn't require as much time as it takes."

Scenically, the Amur offers little that is stupendous, but much that is mildly interesting. The great sight of the voyage is the so-called "burning mountains," cliffs of lignite where strata of coal deposits are smoldering. At night the spectacle may be uncanny, but by day it is tame and disappointing. At last, ten days after leaving Pokrovka, we reach

A PASSING RAFT

ARRIVAL AT BLAGOVESCHENSK

the metropolis of the Amur, the city with the name that twists the tongue unmercifully until one learns to say it trippingly, Blagoveschensk. It is the most attractive city in Siberia. It has an air of enterprise about it that is refreshing, after the hopeless crudity of the Cossack settlements along the river, and, best of all, it has an excellent hotel, with good clean beds, attentive servants, and a fair cuisine. But this is not so astonishing when we discover that it is not a Russian enterprise; the owner is a Frenchman. Two large, ambitious stores front on the public square, the finer

A VOTIVE CHURCH

AN AMERICAN ESTABLISHMENT

one being that of a German firm. Germans are found everywhere in this new land, developing its commerce, putting in

THE MAIN STREET OF BLAGOVESCHENSK

THE GRAND HOTEL

its electric lights, making the German language the commercial language of Siberia, just as English is the commercial language of China and Japan. In Siberia the Englishman is

THE THEATER

conspicuously absent; the American is represented by vast quantities of imports from the United States, handled, however, with but few exceptions by German traders.

But what of the convicts? This is the question that will be asked by every reader. Without denying the existence of the horrors described by those who have studied the penal system of Russia, we must reply that we saw no sign of them. We examined several prison-barges — en route to the new penal settlements on the island of Saghalien at the mouth of

A CONVICT BARGE

the Amur. The prisoners — men, women, and children — were to all appearances better cared for and far more comfortably installed on the barred decks of the barges than the free and independent poor folk who were our fellow-passengers on the overcrowded post-boats. The prisoners were assured of shelter and food, and they had sufficient space. The emigrants with us, as sometimes we ourselves, slept with no roof above their heads, frequently ran short of food, and so scant was the allowance of space when all laid them down to sleep at night that it was not possible to walk the

THIRD-CLASS

deck without treading on the serried mass of slumbering humanity. The prison-cars on the railway were, also, so far as we could judge, preferable in point of comfort to the third- and fourth-class cars assigned to the prospective settlers who traveled under government protection. But it should not be forgotten that Siberia is no longer the destination of Russian convicts and exiles. By the establishment of

PRISONERS

EMIGRANTS

the new penal settlements of Saghalien, Russia has removed the stigma from the name "Siberia," for Siberia is no longer a land of prisons; it has become a land of promise; it is the "Great East" of the Russian Empire. It is difficult to realize that we are within gun-shot of China, for on the Manchurian shore that we follow for more than a thousand miles, there is not a Chinese town or village visible. The Cossack has marched along that shore, and it is now a wilderness unpeopled save by little groups of Russian soldiers sheltered during the "temporary occupation" in tents,—made not of canvas,

THE PRINCIPAL SQUARE

A DEPARTMENT-STORE

but of brick and stone. From yonder shore the Chinese fired upon Blagoveschensk during the Boxer outbreak. The governor, fearing a rising of the local Chinese, ordered them to be transferred immediately across the river to the Chinese shore. There were no boats, but orders must be obeyed, and the hapless, scared, and inoffensive Celestials herded together, were marched several versts upstream, and hurried into the river at the point of the bayonet. They were told to wade or swim to China. But the Amur was *too deep* for wading and too swift for swimming — three thousand corpses floated down the Amur to the sea. Those responsible for this outrage have been punished by the Tsar, but Russia will have no further Chinese question on her Manchurian boundary. Although a ferry now runs to and fro, no white man may cross the river without a special

DOING THE ENVIRONS

permit; but a few Chinese traders and gardeners go back and forth between the city and the Cossack barracks on the other shore.

Contrary to all promises and predictions, the navigation of the Amur below Blagoveschensk proves as difficult as that of the upper reaches. The post-boats are stalled between perricatts.

COMMEMORATING THE VISIT OF THE HEIR APPARENT IN 1891

TOWARDS THE MANCHURIAN SHORE

The post-company is compelled to lease an independent stern-wheeler, which is named the "Siever" to carry the mails and us to meet the official boat,

MANCHURIANS

GENERAL DIEDRICHS, EX-SENATOR BEVERIDGE, AND LOCAL FUNCTIONARIES

said to be detained at a bar three days' run downstream. But to our delight and surprise, on the second morning out, the long-looked-for boat comes tearing upstream at a tremendous pace. We signal it to stop. Both steamers are soon made fast to the shore. All hands on the "Siever" in

THE GENERAL'S PIANO

THE "SIEVER"

great excitement pack up bedding and baggage, and make a mad rush toward the other boat to secure good places. But there seems to be a hitch; the other captain has received no orders to transfer his passengers, and supported by them he flatly declares that he is bound for Blagoveschensk, and that he will not turn back. And then with a resignation that is one of the most astounding characteristics of the Russians,

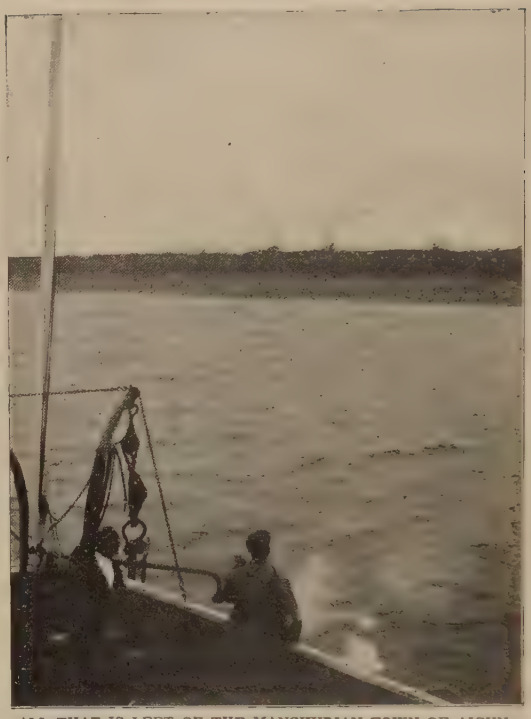
WITH BAG AND BAGGAGE

the disappointed mob calmly returns to unpack and rearrange its goods and chattels on our decks—all this without a murmur, without the slightest suggestion of indignation or annoyance.

THE SIBERIAN MAIL

REPULSED BUT RESIGNED

"Nitchevo; the captain has no orders, nitchevo." Even when our captain announces that he will not proceed another verst, there is no protest. His contract was to meet the post-boat; *he has met it*. The fact that it scorns us and proceeds up-river, does not alter his attitude. To all except ourselves it appears quite proper that we should wait here one and one-half days for orders from some official, somewhere, who has evidently forgotten all about us. A freight-barge happens to be in tow, and to it we are transferred, and on it floated downstream to a point where another post-boat is supposed to be waiting. The deliberation with



ALL THAT IS LEFT OF THE MANCHURIAN TOWN OF AIGUN

BULKY MAIL-SACKS

TRANSFERRED TO THE BARGE

which the transfer is effected is almost maddening. A hundred unwieldly leather mail-trunks are one by one extracted from the "Siever" and stowed in the hold of the barge, each trunk taxing the strength of four men. "Why not use small mail-bags, more easily handled?" we inquire.

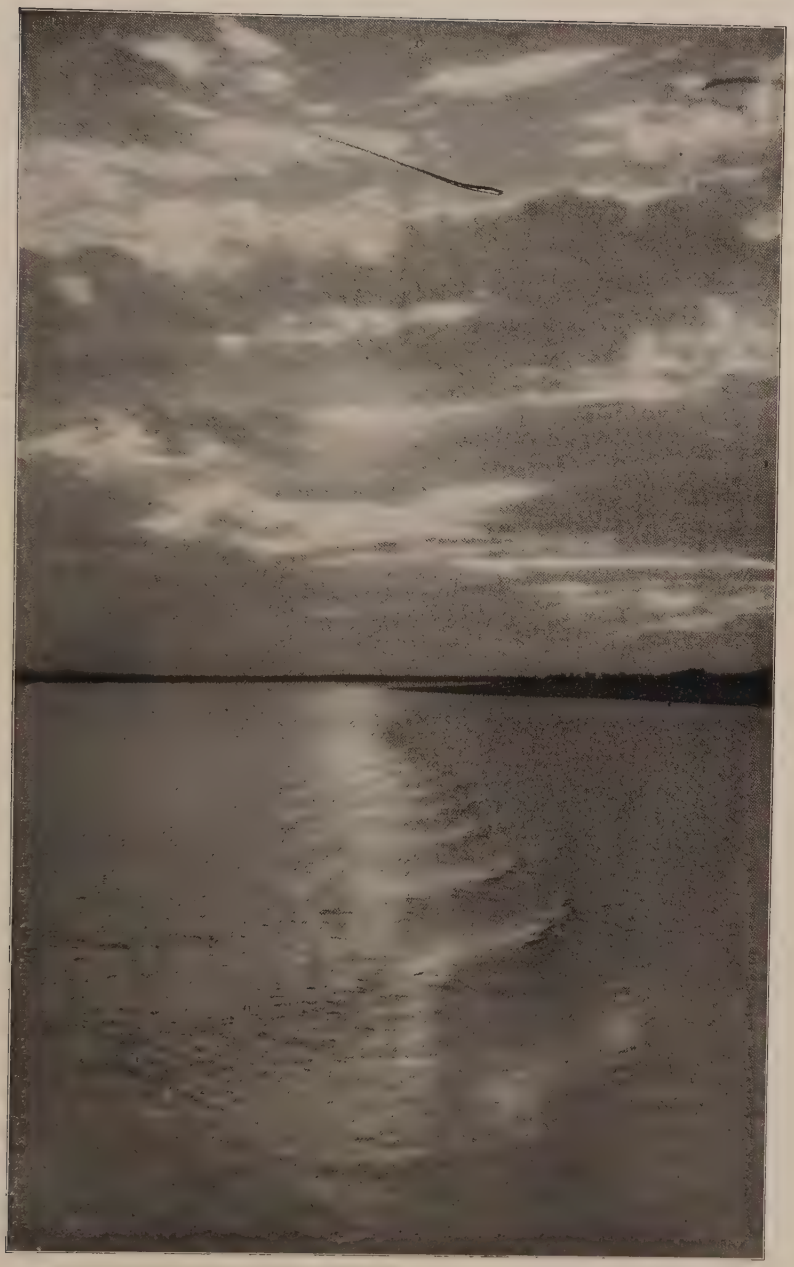
DRIFTING DOWNSTREAM ON A FREIGHT BARGE

POLING OFF

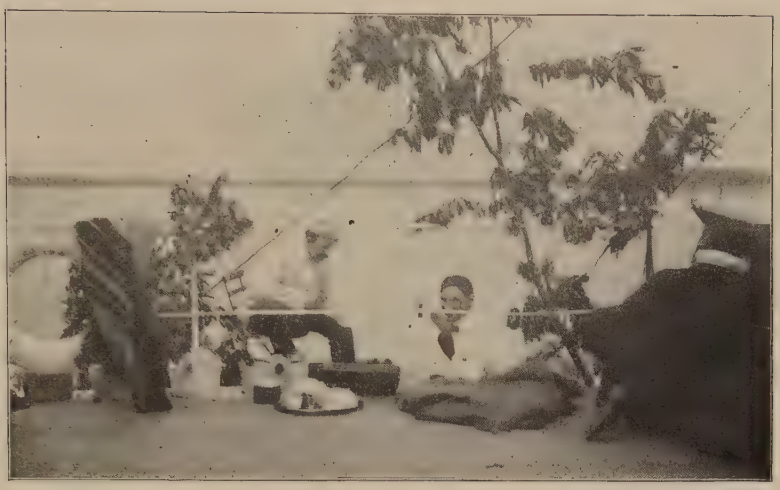
"Because," replies Mr. "Nitchevo," "there are so many *large towns* that small sacks would not suffice."

All day we drift, aided a little by a score of men, trudging along the shore with a long tow-line. Still no complaints,

THE WAITING POST-BOAT



OUR WAKE



OUR "CABIN"

no murmurs. Officers and emigrants, actors and tourists, cossacks and mujiks, are alike submissive to the hardships imposed by a most reprehensible lack of management and forethought. The passengers are even asked to man the poles with which the barge is kept off-shore when rounding points or passing shallows. This they do with hearty good-will. Would that we nervous, fretful foreigners could profit by this example.

OUR MESS

"WILL THE CAPTAIN EVER COME?"

At last the post-boat comes in view. With its two hundred much-abused but equally patient passengers it has been

A LONELY LAMPLIGHTER

THE GATHERING STORM

waiting for orders for five days. To shelter the decks from the sun, young trees have been fixed to the upper railings,

ARRIVAL AT KHABAROVSK

and a big canvas has been spread over the forward deck. We fall heir to an arbor over the port-side paddle-box. The cabins are insufferably close, and we gladly leave them to the Russians who are afraid of draughts. Throughout the remainder of the voyage we "camp out" on the top of that paddle-box, sleeping by night under the glorious moon and stars, by day killing time in cooking our own provisions, and thus sustaining not only our own lives but those of the young Russian chinovniks who had so kindly shared their cabins with us on the barge "Aurora." They in

"GOOD-BY"

KHABAROVSK

HOTEL DE KHABAROVSK

THE NICHOLAS ARCH

return become interpreters to our expedition ; their linguistic attainments placed at our disposal compensate in a measure for the loss of the Professor, who resigned his post and escaped from Blagoveschensk on another steamer.

We are now in our *fourth week* on the Amur, and the days begin to succeed one another with less

THE MILITARY BAND

and less strain upon the patience. We are actually getting used to Siberian slowness. We begin to feel the charm of the long stretches of peaceful monotony, scenic and incidental. The wide lower reaches of the Amur are indeed impressive, their

A CABBY

vastness broken by fantastically shaped sand-spits that look like continents on a huge relief map of an unfamiliar world.

The shores and islands appear almost uninhabited; but every day we see a lone man, somewhere on the bank, or else rowing along in a small boat—he is one of the lamplighters of the Amur, charged with the care of the range-lights upon the treacherous watery highway. But we are

CONVICTS

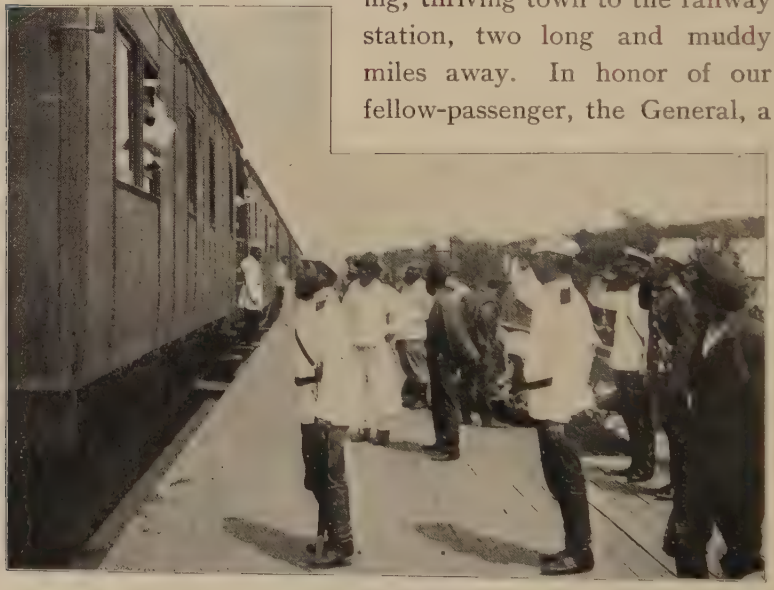
now beyond the reach of perricatts, and our staunch, rapid boat gives us a splendid exhibition of her powers, running at express speed along this watery track, like a thoroughbred who knows that the road is sure and the destination near.

Khabarovsk is her destination, for from Khabarovsk a railway runs due south to Vladivostok. We have been twenty-eight days on the river; that is, four weeks have intervened since the arrival of our train at Stryetensk, thirteen

hundred miles away. Of this time seven days were spent in waiting for steamers at the river ports ; twelve days were spent on perricatts, or at woodpiles, or in waiting for the tardy orders of an inefficient management ; and the remaining nine days, which should have been the limit of the entire river trip, were employed in actual travel.

FLIRTING

So much time has been lost that we "do not even hesitate" in Khabarovsk. Hiring two baggage-wagons and two cabs we make a frantic dash across the growing, thriving town to the railway station, two long and muddy miles away. In honor of our fellow-passenger, the General, a

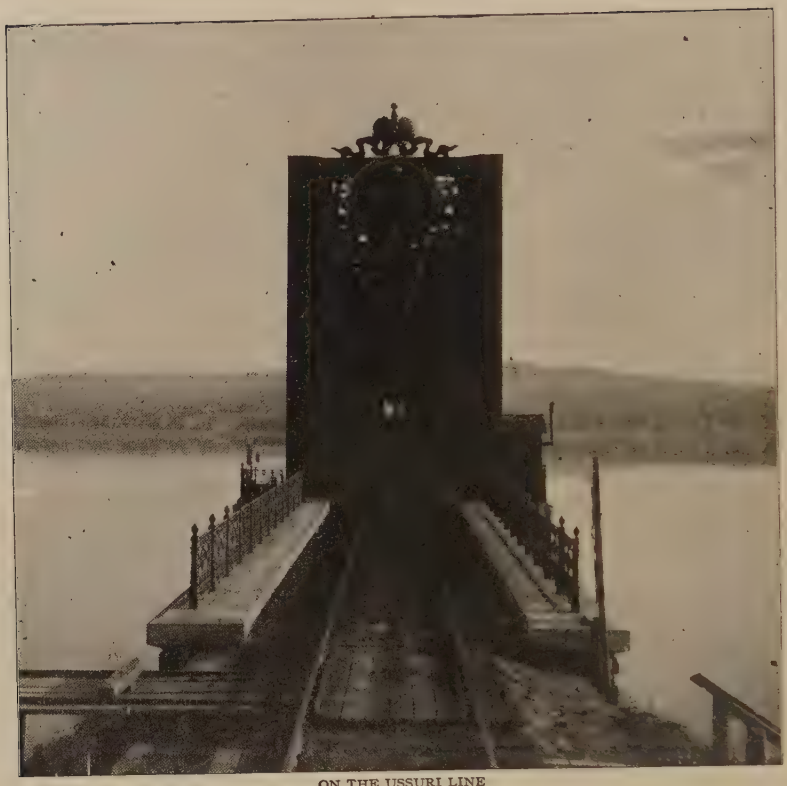


THE GENERAL

OUR LONG-LOST FRIEND

band is at the station to play the morning train out of town. The train is packed, people in the third-class cars are standing in the aisles. An energetic porter, however, secures for us the only berths that remained. And into whose compartment do you suppose my baggage has been unceremoniously dumped? Into the very stateroom of our long-lost friend, the polite Polish gentleman! Well, —we made the best of it, greeting each other as if we had never met before! Two men cannot sit for thirty hours with drawn swords of malice in a compartment measuring less than five by seven feet. The Pole amazes

THE USSURI DINING-CAR



ON THE USSURI LINE

THE OLD ROAD

me by asking if the pictures that I took of his boat have turned out well? He begs me to send him copies. "They will be so interesting for my wife, in Warsaw," he explains. And when we came to part at Vladivostok, he seized my hand and said condescendingly, "*Nous nous pardonnons, n'est-ce-pas?*" "We pardon each other, do we not?" and

A PROSPEROUS REGION

I said, "*Oui*," and he said, "*Au plaisir*," and left the car. And then I found some of his footwear under the berth, and chased his cab up the street to throw his old shoes after him! —and this closed the incident of the polite Polish gentleman.

The final stage, by the Ussuri Railway, so named from the great river, the Ussuri, that is crossed en route, occupies

thirty hours, the distance covered being about five hundred miles. The road has been in operation since 1897, for it was the first section completed, work having been begun at Vladivostok in 1891. It traverses a fertile and attractive

EASTERN END OF THE MANCHURIAN LINE, NEAR NIKOLSKOYE

coast province, rich in possibilities for Russian colonists. The villages look thrifty, the roads are better than in Russia.

AN OFFICER

NEW-COMERS

and promise smiles upon even the newest comers, large groups of whom we find encamped along the line waiting to be sent on to the districts to which they have been assigned. The colonization of Siberia is managed on military principles; regiments of farmers and artisans are sent where they are needed, not where *they* think they want to go.

NIKOLSKOYE

It is not often that an ordinary railway-switch commands the rapt attention of the traveler, yet I confess I looked upon one at the junction of Nikolskoye, with a sense almost of awe, for it is one of the most important mile-stones that mark the eastward advance of Russian domination. It marks the eastern end of the new line called the Eastern

Chinese Railway — nominally Chinese, actually Russian — that cuts across Manchuria from Kaidalovo, near Stryetensk, to this junction of Nikolskoye.

At the station we witness a scene that is remarkable as an illustration of the confusion of races out of which Russia is evolving her eastern empire. On the station platform a

KOREANS

crowd of Chinese, Manchurians, Koreans, Cossacks, and mujiks, surges around a group of Russian officers who are receiving with military courtesy the little General, who has come direct from St. Petersburg to inspect the garrison maintained by Russia at this front door of Manchuria.

Soon after leaving Nikolskoye, we see with a thrill of pleasure, there in the east, the waters of the western

TIDE-WATER AT LAST

TWO GENTLEMEN OF CHO-SEN

ocean, an arm of the Pacific. Our seemingly interminable journey is to have an end at last. Of this we have had doubts for many days, for the lazy Amur and its lazier boats had made the continent seem wider than the world itself. The immensity and endlessness of Siberian space oppressed

APPROACHING VLADIVOSTOK

us and made us feel as if we were the prisoners of some vastness, across which we could travel and progress forever, but from which there was no escape. But the sea means freedom, and we rejoice in the thought that over yonder waters lies the billowy road that leads to San Francisco.

"VLADIVOSTOK TO ST. PETERSBURG 9,877 VERSTS"

An hour later we enter Vladivostok. Had we arrived by sea direct from America we should have spent long weeks in this wonderful new city, with its ugly architecture and its lovely situation; we should have devoted half the lecture to our impressions of this splendid port. But we arrive by land after an intensely interesting, but intensely weary journey from wonderful old Moscow, and the more wonderful and

THE PRINCIPAL THOROUGHFARE

more ancient city of Peking awaits us. We are eager to reach the Chinese capital before the gates of the Forbidden City be again closed to the "foreign devil." Therefore we may not linger in Vladivostok. But at the moment of arrival we experience one of those great thrills that now and then reward the traveler and mark the accomplishment of some long-dreamed-of undertaking, as when we read these words

THE VLADIVOSTOK TERMINAL STATION

in Slavic characters on the wall of the station "Vladivostok to St. Petersburg 9,877 versts." That is about 6,500 miles. These 6,500 miles we have covered in forty-two and a half days. But we are perhaps among the last to make the Trans-Siberian journey as it has been described here, for with the completion of the Manchurian line the time from

VLADIVOSTOK

St. Petersburg to the Pacific should be reduced to less than sixteen days, all rail-travel save for the crossing of Lake Baikal. Those who in future suffer and enjoy the delightful discomforts of the shallow Shilka and the broad Amur will do so from choice and not necessity, for the hurried traveler will soon be enabled to cross all Europe and Asia by rail in

less time than it now takes to go by sea from California to Japan. Hastily we scan the splendid harbor which, though marred by the ragged temporary town around its rim, is one of the most beautiful in the world. The ships of the Asiatic squadron of the Russian fleet rest like a line of floating fortresses upon the waters of the land-locked gulf. Forts crown

THE RUSSIAN ASIATIC SQUADRON

every hill-top, batteries bristle at every point, but the police keep a watchful eye on wandering alien photographers who must have recourse to the windows of hotels for points of view. Permits to photograph in Vladivostok, applied for the day of our arrival, promised for the morrow, were delivered to us in Yokohama six weeks later! Nature, too,

conspires with the authorities to balk photographic enterprise, for soon masses of fog come rolling in from the sea, veiling the city and the port, moving about as if in obedience to

THE EASTERN THRESHOLD OF SIBERIA

COSSACKS

military command, obscuring now the contour of the hills, now the outline of the harbor, making it impossible for one to form even a mental picture of the wonderful scene in its entirety.

We look with amazement at the blocks of new buildings lining the steep streets, at the handsome structure of the Russo-Chinese bank, at the well-stocked department-stores, crowded with customers. We gaze with interest at the Chinese

THE NEW POST-OFFICE

and Koreans whose lands we are soon to visit, and we look with never-failing admiration at the sturdy Russian soldiers everywhere in evidence. Never shall we forget the chanting

THE RUSSO-CHINESE BANK

of the battalions that pass by night beneath our windows, with a harmonious roar like that of a strong wind amid the tops of tall, firm trees. Soldiers who sing as they march seem more than soldiers, and the song of those marching Cossacks sounded like the voice of a conquering race. "Vladivostok"—"Dominion of the East," are the words that ring in our ears as we listen to that music of the many-throated columns. And as the silence comes again, our thoughts go back to the vastnesses of Siberia, across which all these Muscovitish men have made their way, and we realize as never before, the great fact that *Russia has reached the Pacific.*

Her slow eastward advance across the Urals into Asia was begun three hundred years ago by Yermak and his Cossack bands—the Cossacks are still advancing eastward, singing as they march the song of "The Dominion of the East." Conquered slowly and for the most part, peacefully, Siberia is to-day a colossal monument to Russian patience, perseverance, and endurance, the three qualities by means of which the Muscovite is working out the splendid destiny of his ambitious race.

PEKING

regarding with mute defiance the exodus of the avengers and the rebuilding of the fortress-like legations—this is the Peking of the year of Our Lord 1901.

Christendom at last made herself felt in China, but heroic as was her entrance upon the scene, her sojourn and retirement can be recalled by lovers of humanity with naught but

THE GULF OF PE-CHI-LI

regret. Attenuate it as you will, allow for the exaggerations of the press reports, the extravagances that the rolling story gathers as it travels from Orient to Occident, the fact remains that Western Civilization stands disgraced in the eyes of universal Justice. Foreign occupation has confirmed the Chinese in their belief that Western nations are barbarian

A glorious opportunity to give light and health and life to four hundred millions of our fellow-creatures was neglected by the enlightened powers, robbed of their initiative for good by selfish jealousies. True, the chastisement of China was imperative. China has been chastised. But how? Thousands of innocent folk have suffered; hundreds of peaceful villages have been destroyed; a few of the supposed guilty have been punished; but the actual instigators of the Boxer outbreak and the more powerful ones who supported and encouraged the fanatics still sit in high places, or, at the worst, loll in a luxurious exile. Christendom now abandons China burdened with debt, and officially invites the old régime to resume its blighting sway in the Forbidden City. The last state of the "Sick Man of Asia" is worse than the first.

I do not question for a moment the statement of an officer who said on leaving Peking in August, 1901, "It is not good-by. We shall all be back before long, the job is only patched up, it is not finished."

The story of the Boxer outbreak, of the siege of the legations, of the relief-expeditions, and of the capture and occupation of Peking by the international forces, has been already told a hundred times from a hundred points of view. In these pages we are to follow, merely as interested travelers, the route from Taku to Peking, to look upon the scenes made memorable by these events and other scenes that are significant because they throw a little light upon the problem of the East — the mystery of China.

As one evening early in August, 1901, we approach the Chinese coast, en route from Nagasaki to Taku, we see the sun of progress gilding the celestial skies. It is the

CHI-FU

same glorious orb that in its daily course has lighted up the finished, splendid capitals of modern Europe, smiled upon the new-born cities of the broad United States, glanced at fair Honolulu, and marveled at the rapidly progressing cities of Japan. It is now looking down upon the capital of China to see what England, Germany, France, Italy, Austria, America, and Dai Nippon have accomplished, yonder in Peking,

OFF TAKU

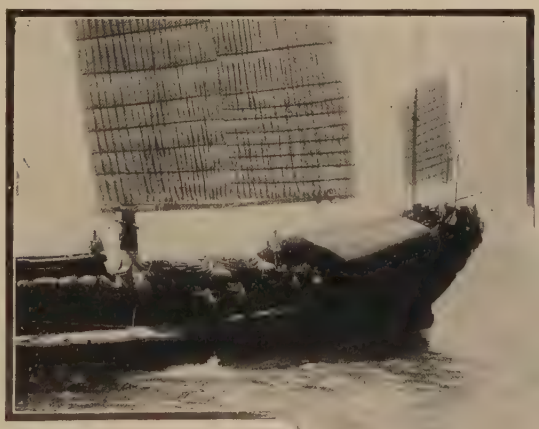
in the name of humanity and progress. Our steamer touches at Chi-fu, a busy port, picturesque, semi-European, abounding in missionary schools and institutions, and foreign banks, with the consulates of the great nations crowning the bluff, and with ships from the four corners of the earth at anchor in the spacious harbor which is alive with smaller native craft.

But at Chi-fu we shall not disembark. We steam on westward all night across the gulf of Pe-chi-li, and find ourselves at sunrise off Taku, the famous port of Peking—a long way "off Taku," for we are amid the warships at the outer anchorage, so far from shore that we see nothing but

"LE RÉDOUBTABLE"

A CHINESE CRAFT

the sea, the sky, and that amazing archipelago of war-ships —the huge fleet of the Allied Powers. On all sides lie the sullen cruisers, the watch-dogs of Europe, crouching at this watery threshold of decrepit China. Nearly all the great powers are represented in this floating congress of avengers; but we have intercourse with but one iron-clad, the flag-ship of the French, the "Rédoubtable." We accost her on washing-day, as is evidenced by the aspect of the yards, half concealed by the clothes of the crew hung out to dry. Had it not been for the courtesy of the French naval-officers (among whom was numbered Pierre Loti, author of "*Les Derniers Jours de Pékin*"), we should have suffered great inconvenience in reaching shore. We arrive on a steamer chartered by the French government to carry mails from Nagasaki to the ships of the French squadron off Taku.



A JUNK

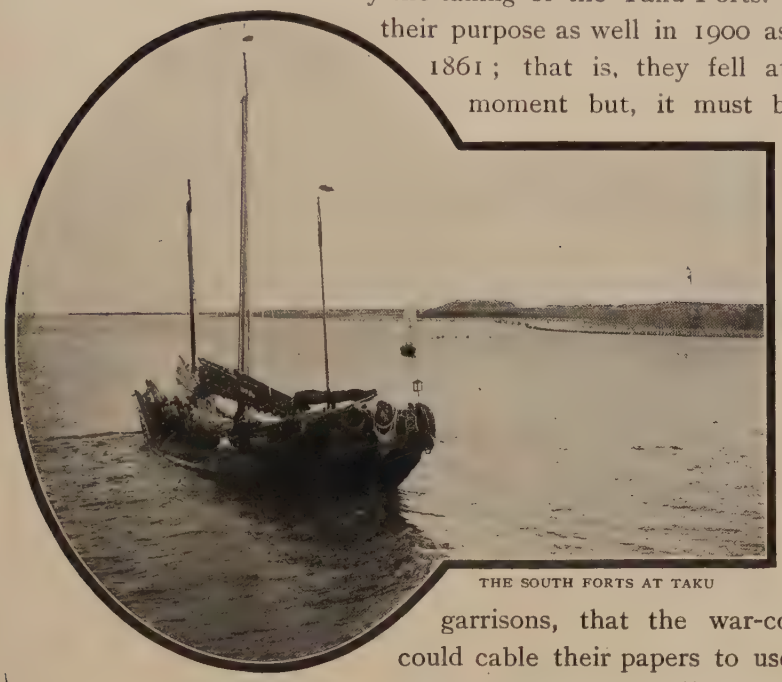
We travel on sufferance and without any assurance of being put ashore in China, for there are no tenders save the launches of the fleet, and the port is seventeen miles from the anchorage. Our only alternative would have been to hail one of the lazy fishing-junks, making their shoreward way to the slow dip of tired oars and the flapping of listless sails composed of heavy mats of straw. But fortunately we are spared the threatened six hours of that sort of thing; after some delay and four thrilling transfers in a rough sea, from

TRYING TRANSFERS

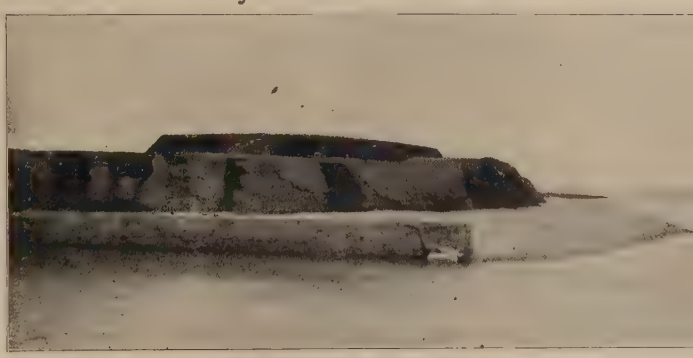
tugs to launches and from launches to an improvised tender, we finally go speeding over the yellow waves toward the celebrated mud forts of Taku. They rise, menacing and repellent, from a shore so low and featureless that it appears merely like a thick yellow scum lying upon the waters.

The forts are ponderous walls of yellow clay, raised to protect the entrance to yellow Pei-Ho River—and to be taken

repeatedly by foreign foes. The initial act in a war with China is usually the taking of the Taku Forts. They served their purpose as well in 1900 as they did in 1861; that is, they fell at the proper moment but, it must be confessed, this was after a brief defense that cost the allies dear. Thereupon, however, the garrisons adhered so successfully to the tradition of the Taku garrisons, that the war-correspondents could cable their papers to use the old line in stereotype, "The Chinese ran away." Between the forts the Pei-Ho River empties its soiled and dingy waters into the soiled and dingy yellow sea. We hear the epithet of "noble" applied so frequently to famous rivers that it is almost a relief to find a stream which does not call for that most dignified of adjectives. The Pei-Ho is eminently an ignoble stream—a turbid, turgid canal of yellowish mud,



THE SOUTH FORTS AT TAKU



THE NORTH FORT AT TAKU

creeping in awkward curves between low slimy shores, which seem to be a portion of the ugly stream itself, solidified and raised a few feet above the general level. The town of Taku on the right bank is one of the most hopeless places of human habitation I have ever seen. Its houses are of yellow mud, its people of yellow clay, its streets appear like furrows in a plain of mud — the whole seems like some horrible haunt of amphibious maggots, uncovered by a sudden subsidence of

TAKU TOWN

the dirty waters. Our hearts sink at the thought that fellow human-beings can exist in such a place. Along the water-front, naked children are wading in the slime, where only a few months before had lain the myriad corpses that came drifting downstream to tell of the unspeakable horrors that attended the advance of the invaders.

A little way above that soggy village of Taku we see a trim white ship-of-war at anchor; it flies our flag; it is the veteran keel of Chinese waters, the antique of the United

IN THE PEI-HO

States Navy, the antediluvian, "Monocacy." She was sent out to die in China; but life is strong in the sturdy old craft, and she will continue to spend her declining days at rest upon the yellow tides of celestial rivers. She played no part in the taking of the forts; but we need not discuss the pros and cons of the commander's attitude. We know that it was not want of pluck that kept her out of the initial row, for later on she did the state much service in the shallow upper reaches of the river near Tien-Tsin.

The Pei-Ho is alive with junks, all flying the flag of one or another of the Allied Nations, or a banner bearing the legend, "Licensed by the Provisional Government." Foreign flags flutter protectingly above many of the hovels in

THE U. S. S. MONOCACY

the muddy wilderness of Taku. We are put on shore on the left bank, at a place that bears the name of Tongku. We wade through mud as deep as our disgust, following a long procession of coolies who have with pirate-like ferocity pos-

TONGKU

sessed themselves of our belongings. Tongku is not a pleasant place. There is an unsubstantiality about its thoroughfares that inspires a vague dread of sudden sinkings into an even more infernal region. It is with thankfulness that we find ourselves and our possessions safely housed in the Tivoli Hotel which lies, I was about to say, within a few paces of the station; but, to be more exact, it lies within four mud-puddles and two refuse-heaps, of the railway-yard. To

PORTERS

THE TIVOLI HOTEL AT TONGKU

our surprise, we find that in spite of all we are still hungry ; in fact, our appetites have waxed so strong that even Taku and Tongku cannot overcome them. Accordingly we dine upon the best that the Tivoli can offer. And here, even in this hopeless place, the genius of the Gallic race asserts itself, for the proprietor is a Frenchman, and the dinner that he provides is excellent,—well cooked and well served by a diminutive Celestial. *Vive la cuisine Française!*

THE RAILWAY-STATION, TONGKU

Tongku is the starting-point of the railway-line to Peking. We find the line restored, and operated under the direction of the British. The station-guards are Sikhs of the Hong-kong regiment ; the conductors are Australian man-of-war's men ; the ticket-takers are Chinese, and the station-master is an Englishman. We know all this because the combined force turns out to arrest us. We chance to be wearing our Russian military caps, bought in Blagoveschensk on our recent journey across Siberia. The Russians and the British

A SIKH

had come almost to blows, a short time before, in a dispute about railway privileges and control. We are planting tripods and taking photographs. This arouses the suspicions of the Sikh sentry who reports that Russian agents are surveying the line. He is ordered to call the guard by the station-master, who meantime rushes out to remonstrate with us. Bitter is the chagrin of the Sikh who started the alarm, when it transpires that we are not minions of the Tsar and that we have no designs upon the transportation system of North China. While we are laughing over the discomforture of the zealous Indian, so jealous of British influence as opposed to Russian, a train comes rolling down from Peking with a regiment of Germans, in khaki uniform, with golden eagles in their helmets.

GERMANS

AT THE TONGKU STATION

The exodus of the Allies has begun. To-morrow they embark for Bremen ; but many of their officers will travel homeward via San Francisco and New York, studying the homeland of their greatest commercial rivals. Every hour there comes to this busy station a crowded train from some point up the line, bringing detachments of all sorts and conditions of soldiers, and usually a string of native pigtails long enough to reach from Tongku to Peking We start from Tongku in the late afternoon, ourselves in one of the bare, cool railway-carriages and our luggage in an oven-like van made of metal, where it is placed in charge of a tall Sikh who represents the only checking-system operative in these disturbed days.

Toward sunset we approach Tien-Tsin, beyond which the evening train does not proceed. We have traversed about twenty-five miles of desolation in one hour and a half. Our train is filled with officers of half a dozen nationalities, and men of diverse

HUMAN FREIGHT

regiments, from the trim, well-groomed "Tommy Atkins" to the badly soiled soldiers of France and Italy; from the immaculate little Japanese, to the smelly, brawny Russians. Five lines of military telegraph parallel the railway, establishing instant communication between headquarters at Peking and every outpost of every nation along this highway now controlled by the military forces of the Allied Powers.

In Tien-Tsin we receive again that impression of unending toil — which is to me the first, the last, and the most enduring impression that I brought from China — toil that knows

NEARING TIEN-TSIN

no beginning, for it begins before the toilers have begun to think; toil that never ceases, for without it there would be an end to life; toil that racks muscles, tears flesh, fixes on every brow of bronze a crown of pearls of sweat; toil that would be heroic were it not utterly unconscious of itself.

Well may we call the Chinese "ants," and their cities "ant-hills." The heel of Europe may crush and scatter the

TIEN-TSIN

heaps raised by these busy toilers, and grind out a million busy lives. It avails nothing. Other millions of toilers recommence the task, and build again — instinctively as ants — another city after their own fashion. The native city of Tien-Tsin, now in ruins, is policed by foreign troops. Its ramparts have been razed; smooth boulevards have been created where useless city-walls once stood. The ants look on without wonder or complaint, and those who toil in

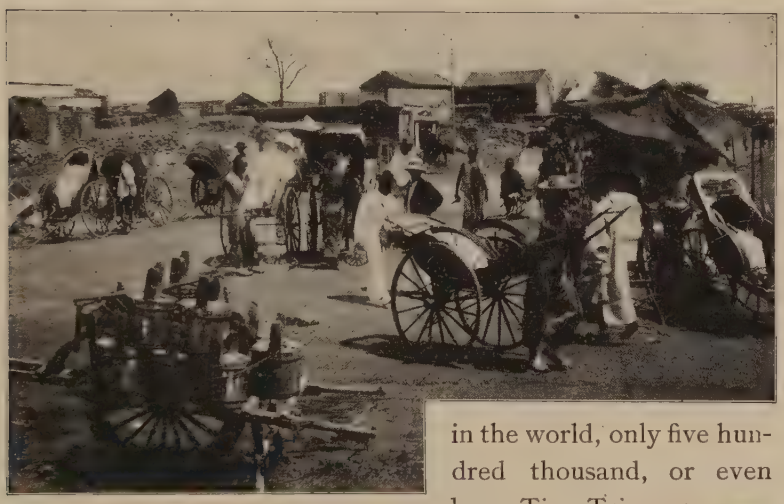
TIEN-TSIN TOILERS

transport choose the new unobstructed road made by the "foreign devil"; but never would they have made it for themselves. Left to themselves they will in time obliterate all traces of this foreign occupation, and forget the days when European and Japanese patrols marched through their streets, hindering the progress of the creaking wheelbarrows, the swinging baskets, and the green sedan-chairs of pompous mandarins.

Although it strikes us as an unfamiliar fact, we can accept without a question the statement that this city of

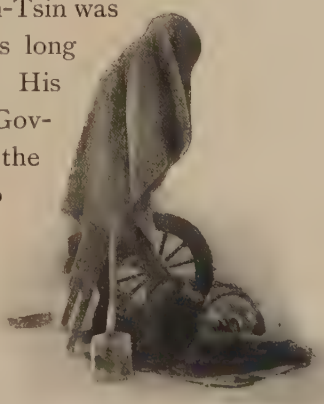
Tien-Tsin is the second largest in the empire; larger than Peking, and smaller only than Canton, the southern metropolis. Estimated roughly the respective populations are, Canton two million souls; Tien-Tsin one million, and Peking, the capital, once believed to be the most populous city

A SUNSHADE



SITE OF THE DEMOLISHED CITY WALLS

in the world, only five hundred thousand, or even less. Tien-Tsin was the residence of Li Hung Chang during his long viceroyship of the Province of Pe-chi-li. His *yamun* is now occupied by the Provisional Government, and there we find the mess-table of the hard-working, conscientious Europeans, who in this critical time are ruling wisely and justly the unnumbered millions of this devastated province. But the "P. G.," as this provisional government is called,



MIDDAY REPOSE

THE JAPANESE PATROL

knows China too well to alter the old ways — in the courtyard two Chinese policemen are "bambooing" a Chinese malefactor, to the obligato screeched by his protesting wife — and this is done by order of the all powerful "P. G." An illustration of the Chinese way of doing things is afforded at one end of the bridge that spans the river at this point. There is a difference in the levels of street and bridge. No one has ever thought to ease the bump by the

DESOLATION IN TIEN-TSIN

YAMUN OF LI HUNG CHANG

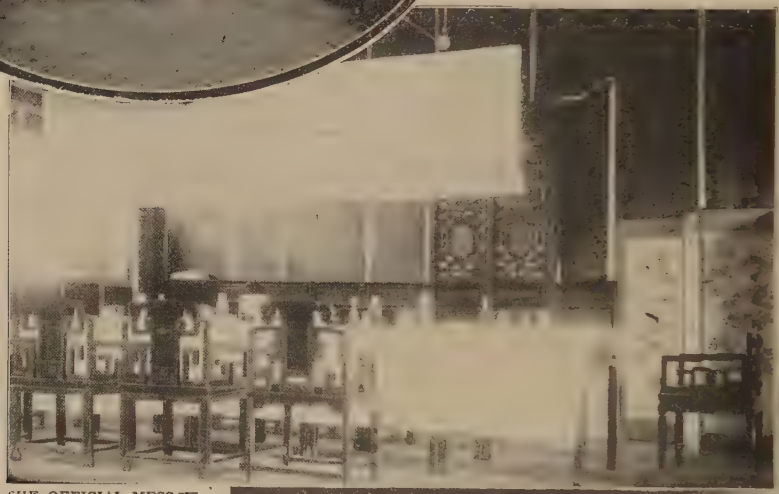
placing of an inclined plank. All day long the patient human horses of Tien-Tsin waste their strength in butting at that bump with rikishas, laden carts, and over-laden wheel-barrows.

In one sense, at least, much of the salt of the earth is gathered at Tien-Tsin. Although our officers and soldiers

IN THE YAMUN COMPOUND

merit well the title, I do not allude to General Chaffee and his men; of them, and of their almost unique attitude of honesty during the period of international thieving, I shall not attempt to speak. I was not in China during those times of

PIGTAILED PRISONERS



THE OFFICIAL MESS IN THE VICEROY'S PALACE

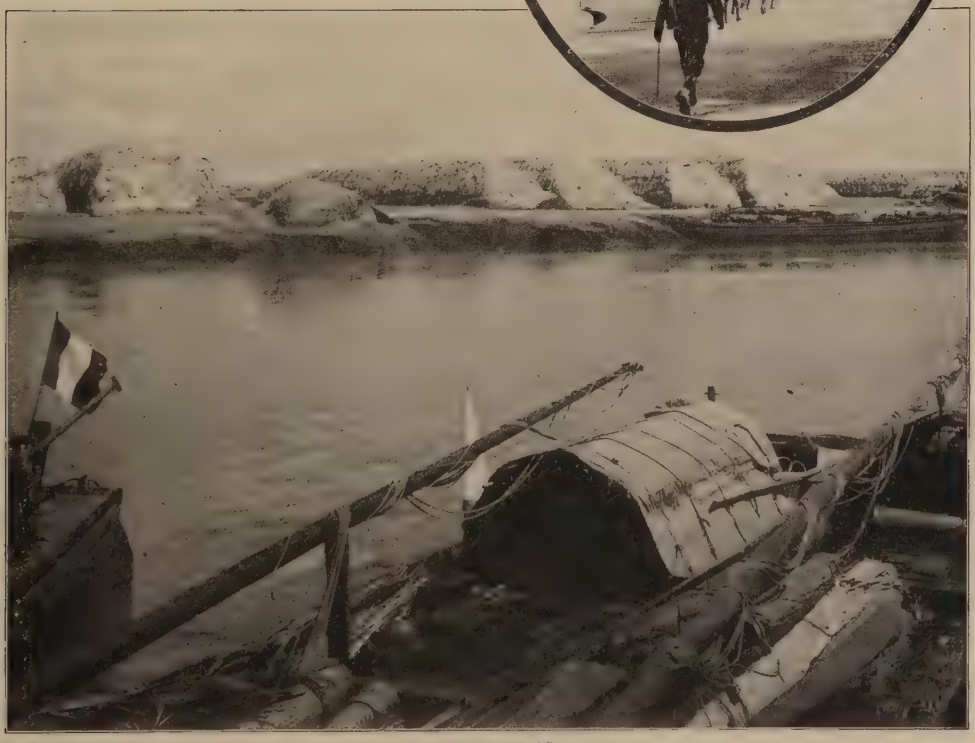
confusion. I know only from hearsay what was done, and hearsay has it that Chaffee and our boys controlled by him were then

THE BRIDGE

about the only clean-handed folk in China. The salt I speak of is real salt, mountains of it heaped upon the banks of the Pei-Ho, each saline sierra covered with straw mats. It is the tribute salt,—the salt of the governmental monopoly, one of the chief sources of income for the Imperial Exchequer.

There are two cities of Tien-Tsin, one Chinese and the other international. We

THE ASTOR HOUSE HOTEL



SALINE SIERRAS

A FERRY ON THE PEI-HO

lodge in the French quarter, where we sleep on the floor at one end of the hallway at the Hôtel des Colonies. But although beds are dear and hard to find,—harder yet when

HÔTEL DES COLONIES

we do find them,—there is no lack of cheap conveyances, as we discover whenever we step to the doorway to hail a rikisha man—a veritable avalanche of rikishas invariably descends upon us.

RIKISHA RIDING IN TIEN-TSIN

Straight away from the end of the *Rue* where the French quarter terminates, runs *Victoria Road*, the chief thoroughfare of British Tien-Tsin. We have time

GORDON HALL

only for a glance at Gordon Hall, the municipal building, memorable as the refuge for the foreign women and children of Tien-Tsin during the siege,—a siege not one whit less trying than that experienced by the Peking legationers. For many days shells were falling in this foreign settlement, dropping in at meal-time, making sunrise calls at the bedside,

or whizzing overhead like shrill messengers of terror, delivering with screeching emphasis the expressions of hatred sent by exasperated China to the despised "foreign devils."

The world knows how an end was put to that brief reign of terror — how Russian, Japanese, and British troops stormed and took the native city, then surrounded by its

THE AMERICAN CONSULATE AT TIEN-TSIN

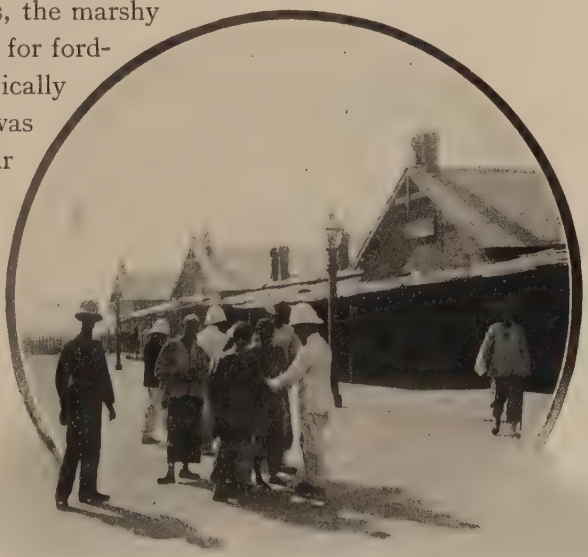
formidable wall, while the ill-fated Ninth Infantry — fresh from a hard campaign in the Philippines was cut to pieces amid the marshes between the foreign quarter and the native town. We visit the spot where Colonel Liscum fell. Whose was the blame it will be difficult to say. A general of the Allies, directing the assault, ordered our men here with the

vague command, "Advance left or right, it makes no difference; but hurry!" It did make a difference—an advance to the right was to prove fruitless and fatal. But

WHERE THE NINTH REGIMENT WAS DECIMATED

the Ninth went to the right and to decimation in obedience to the command. The walls and houses were alive with Chinese sharpshooters, the marshy ditches were too deep for fording; there was practically no shelter, retreat was impossible, and our men were shot down, hopelessly, miserably, while the other troops won glory at the gates and on the walls.

From Tien-Tsin to Peking the distance is about



RAILWAY-STATION, TIEN-TSIN.

A PEI-HO HOUSEBOAT

seventy-five miles. We cover it in five hours in a comfortable train. Formerly the usual mode of travel to Peking was

AN OBSERVATION-CAR

LANG-FANG STATION

by junk or house-boat "tracked" up the muddy Pei-Ho by a gang of coolies, the voyage demanding several days. Our Chinese fellow-travelers in the flat-cars are not the least

RECOVERING SUBMERGED RAILS

A WANDERING MINSTREL

interesting feature of the trip; packed in by hundreds, they yet maintain a certain poise and dignity peculiar to the Oriental, even under the most adverse conditions. All foreheads are closely shaven, all pigtails neatly braided, and every man has his sun-hat, his sunshade, or his fan.

At every station we are reminded of the wave of destruction that swept along this line as almost the first indication of the coming Boxer storm. The buildings are mere shells, with roofs and windows eaten by the flames. It was at one of these stations that Admiral Seymour was compelled to give up hope of reaching Peking by rail. Bridges were down and rails were up, and the relief expedition abandoned the train and started on its disastrous

VENDERS

ENTERING PEKING

THE TEMPLE OF HEAVEN TERMINAL

march toward the capital. It was turned back by weight of Chinese numbers and European wounded. But the Chinese are paying for the havoc wrought and for the sufferings endured by the victims of their rage.

We see large bands of ex-Boxers toiling waist-deep in the slimy pools along the line,—diligently bringing to light the English rails which they had so gleefully flung down from the embankment a few short months before. During the long stops at the ruined stations we study with interest the crowds of native venders—men and boys from the neighboring villages who are recouping their personal losses by selling fruit and bottles of beer or mineral water. Many of them

ARRIVAL AT PEKING

also jingle handfuls of silver ten-cent pieces, crying, "changee dollar, changee dollar!" and to our surprise they gladly give eleven Japanese dimes for every Japanese or Chinese silver dollar! The Chinese regard only the bullion value of precious metals—they know full well that there is more silver in one big dollar than in eleven little dimes.

We roll from station to station, each one more miserable than the last, on across the fields of towering maize or sorghum stalks with the five parallels of telegraph poles to keep

PEKING!

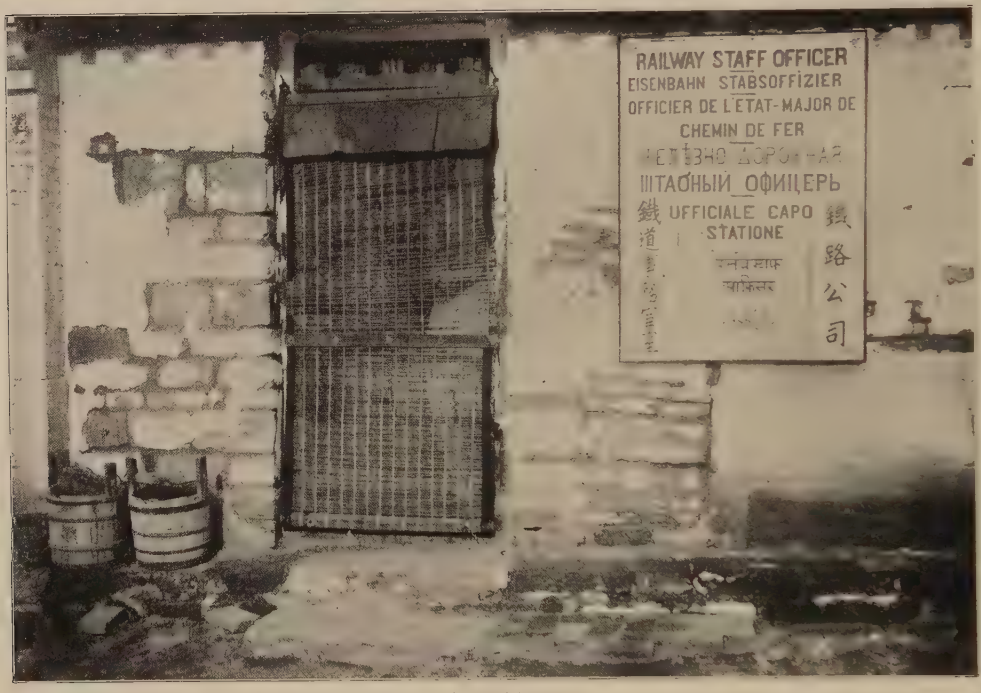
us company, until after five hours of interesting monotony, there rises before us—as suddenly as if it had been thrust up from the earth—the great South Gate of Peking. The west end of its curving roof is partially wrecked; otherwise the portal is intact, and to right and left stretch the mighty walls of the Chinese city. But the train does not even hesitate at sight of the frowning walls; to our amazement it rolls on as if in a revengeful fury it would batter down that range of medieval masonry, behind which has always lurked so much of ignorant pride and supercilious superiority. We

brace ourselves for the expected shock of collision;—but no shock comes. Again we lean far out and look ahead; and looking we see that which our generation scarcely hoped to see—a locomotive rolling triumphantly through the breached walls of the Celestial Capital! The isolation of Peking is ended; that breach will never be blocked. It does but figure the deep cut in China's national pride—a cut that never will be healed. With a loud shriek of joy the locomotive sweeps proudly across the vacancies of Peking's great

ALLIED OFFICERS ARRIVING IN THE EMPEROR'S PRIVATE CAR

southern plaza—an enormous waste place so broad and long as to appear like a suburban wilderness, belted by walls, blotched with miry ponds, and glorified by a flood of sunshine, pure and dazzling above, but, near the ground, yellowed and actinically attenuated by that wonderful dust-sea in which Peking appears to be submerged to the depth of three or four feet. A moment more and our train halts at a platform before the very gate to the Temple of Heaven converted for the moment into a railway terminal station! Think of it! The unapproachable, inviolable Temple of Heaven, defiled by the smoky breath of the Iron Horse.

Any doubts that we are really in Peking are set at rest by a signboard,—bearing the word "Pekin"—to which we take exceptions because the pronunciation of the name calls for a final "G." It is Pe-king′ and not Pee′kin, the railway-company to the contrary notwithstanding. Still, the railway administration should certainly be well qualified linguistically, for another interesting signboard tells us the "Railway Staff



THAT ALL MAY READ

Officer" must not only answer to his title in English, he must also know that he is "*Eisenbahn Stabs Offizier*," "*Officier de l'État Major de Chemin de Fer*," "*Jelyezno Dorojnaya Staonie Ofizter*," "*Ufficiale Capo Statione*," and several other things, in Japanese, Chinese, and Hindustanee. And all these various tongues are not glued to the printed board, they are wagging wildly in the mouths of the mixed multitude assembled at the station, the

polyglot chorus dominated by the endless and persistent sing-song of Celestial speech — interrupted only by grunts of pain as the stick of a British-Indian sentry falls on the bare bony back of some too eager native.

Sons of the Heavenly Empire have meantime seized our twenty-seven boxes, cameras, and tripods, and are now engaged in solving the Chinese puzzle,— how to stow them all into two Peking carts.

The Peking cart has furnished many an amusing chapter in tales of Chinese travel, but although we have had our first

A PEKING CART

impressions of it discounted by description, we find it still, as it has always been, one of the wonders of the earth — and it is of the earth earthy, despite its sky-blue canopy. Its favorite garb is mud, its best-loved haunts the ruts of hopeless roads — its sole ambition, to show how far over it can lurch without capsizing, and its only pride, its indestructibility. Only the Pekingese know how to enter into and enjoy the Peking cart. Foreigners find it impossible to get

aboard without instruction or example, such as is furnished us by a lady of the Manchu clan, who may be seen in the frontispiece. She gracefully glides in, stepping up, turning, sitting, and then sliding backwards on the inclined floor to a position just above the springless axle. She sits there, tailor fashion, her children on either side — her lord and master taking up his position where one shaft joins the body of the

GOING UP TOWN

cart, while the driver perches on the other shaft, whence he can prod the mule at his ease and dangle his feet in the dust cloud raised by the yellow wheels.

The point of view enjoyed by the passenger is more or less peculiar, as will be proved by a glance at a picture made while sitting cross-legged under the arching canopy of my first Peking cart. To me the mule looked more like a kangaroo; it even appeared to make tremendous leaps, but this

JAPANESE HEADQUARTERS IN TIEN-TSIN

THE PASSENGER'S POINT OF VIEW

was an illusion caused by the sudden droppings of the cart into the cracks or mudholes. Then, too, the passing panorama, framed by the awning and the mule, gave me much the same impression as a very jerky motion-picture projected by a shaky cinematograph — this effect is due to the cruelly continued jolting of the cart, painful not only to the eyes, but to every fiber of the foreigner. For the Peking cart is absolutely springless, and the Peking pavement resembles the débris of an avalanche. It seems as if the cart itself were imbued with the spirits of ten thousand Boxers; it boxes you up, it boxes you down, it gives you upper cuts and

JINRIKISHAS

A BRIDGE

left-handers, knock-out blows and general punishment, and every blow as if by Boxer magic seems to attain the solar plexus. One's first trip in a Peking cart is a veritable voyage of discovery,—discovery of unsuspected kinks in one's own mortal coil. But seriously, the initial experience is attended by actual pain; so rough are the pavements and so racking the jolts of the springless car of Juggernaut. I made attempts to soften the shocks by riding on the hands, thus lifting the body from the floor, but in vain; every now and then up comes the floor, giving the shrinking passenger a blow that more than compensates for all the little shocks to which he has managed to rise superior. It is not possible to rise with success to the trot of this two-wheeled mustang. The victim crawls out from the Peking cart, stiff, racked, and riven, but rich in a new experience of which he is reminded every time he lifts a hand or moves a foot, or sits or rises or tries to turn

POLICE

the head. Forewarned of this, we deferred the experience just described until our last day in Peking, and wisely took jinrikishas, recently introduced, for the long ride to the hotel. We formed almost a caravan, three rikishas for ourselves, one for a British soldier who had volunteered to guide us, one for the cameras and breakables, and two carts for the heavy baggage.

The Peking streets are either submerged in a sea of mud or buried in a Sahara of yellow dust. We find them an

CHIEN-MEN STREET

unhappy combination of bog and ash-heap. "Indescribable" is the word that best describes one's first impressions of Peking; other words that help a little are "bigness," "busy-ness," "desolation," and "dirt." Signs of the times are seen on every side,—the "signs" are in English and German, and refer to soda-water, beer, and cigars.

The main thoroughfare, the Chien-men Street—bisects the Chinese City from south to north, from the South Gate,

where the railway enters, to the Chien-men, the principal gate in the wall separating the Chinese from the Tatar City. This gate, once one of the most famous and familiar features of Peking, is now in ruins. The formidable lower walls are still intact, but the elaborate superstructure, with its red pillars and its great roofs of tile, was swept away by the fire started by the Boxers in the adjacent commercial quarter,

RUINS OF THE CHIEN-MEN

the rich shops of which were pillaged during the confusion. Thus the most conspicuous landmark of Peking presents an unfamiliar and significant aspect to the arriving traveler. The Chien-men is in fact two gates, separated by a busy court; but ere we enter it, our progress is impeded for a moment by the opposing stream of Peking traffic — so Asiatic and so picturesque. Only the magic of the motion-picture can reveal the peculiar fascination of the scene. The

camels, carts, and wagons filled with tribute rice having filed by and disappeared in that low-lying haze of golden dust, we pass through the first archway and find ourselves in the broad court between the gates, where surrounded by gigantic walls lies the busiest of all the busy cross-roads of Peking, the whole wonderful scene enveloped in a deeper, denser, more tawny flood of Peking dust.

Signs of the times again on every side; above us is the ruined tower of the gate, where gallant Reilly fell while shelling the Imperial City; on the left we see a little railway-car belonging to the Emperor's private train, in which he used to go careering round the gardens of the Winter Palace. It stands now in this common court as a shelter and resort for common folk. It would not be here had it not proved to be one of the rare lumps of loot that were too bulky for successful abstraction from the city. Through the second arch we make our way, strange sights calling our gaze in all directions; then turning to the

THE PASSING THRONG

right we find ourselves in Legation Street. It is a trim, well-ordered, and official-looking avenue, strangely un-Pekingese.

What foreigner can look upon that thoroughfare without emotion? For sixty days it held the anxious attention of the world. The gaunt forms of Death, Torture, and Horrors Unspeakable strode up and down that avenue, then isolated —cut off from the world as thoroughly as if it had been

A FUNERAL CORTÈGE

swallowed up by the flood of barbarism that was beating with cowardly fury round the walls of the legations.

A mile dash over the new, smooth pavement of this resuscitated street and a turn to the left brings us into the Ha-Ta-men Street, where we are crowded into the ditch by a funeral procession; but this we do not resent, for the procession is spectacular and worthy of the right of way, and the ditch leads to our hotel. The only hotel in Peking, in 1901, was the Hôtel du Nord, established soon after the

LEGATION STREET, PEKING

occupation of the city, by a German, who had brought his crockery, supplies, bed-clothes, and "boys" from Tien-Tsin on a fleet of fourteen river-junks, in the wake of the Allied Armies. The proprietor himself is on the threshold rebuking a drunken German soldier who has just smashed two jinrikishas after brutally kicking the coolies, because, in fear, they had refused to serve him — knowing from experience

HOTEL DU NORD

that their only pay would come in the form of kicks. Similar occurrences were pitifully common.

The entrance to the new caravansary is not Waldorf-Astorian in splendor. In fact, the courts and buildings now occupied by the hotel were formerly the precincts of a pawnshop. The German hotel-man was saved the trouble of moving out the pledges — the noble army of international looters looked to it that nothing of consequence should be

left to litter the apartments of the future Hôtel du Nord. But we find the old traffic in brocades, bronzes, and cloisonnés proceeding merrily in the first court, where merchants gather every day to sell to tourists rare old curios, their manifolded values justified by the whispering of the magic but misleading word "loot." There is little good loot left in Peking. Look for it in Bond Street and Fifth Avenue.

The rambling groups of low, one-story buildings that serve as sleeping-rooms are scattered round about what looks like a small vacant lot or courtyard,—called a "compound."

To cross that "compound" at night requires careful preliminary calculations, for there are no lights to guide us between the slimy little lakes and the hills of empty bottles, or past the logs and carts and rubbish with which the

"LOOT"

THE HOTEL "COMPOUND"

monotony of the compound is diversified. These are, however, matters of no moment to us; we come from comfortless Siberia. Moreover, the cuisine is marvelously good, well worth the four gold-dollars charged per day; and our rooms, or rather, separate little houses, ranged about a brick-paved, mat-roofed court, are fairly clean and comfortable, though at times damp enough to merit the epithet "soggy." As for the service, there is no end to it. "Boys" of all ages flit by dozens past our doors, carrying water for the Anglo-Saxon tubs, polishing military boots and chalking canvas shoes, pressing and repairing clothes, and hustling tardy laundry-men. One is well waited upon in China.

Being at last housed in tolerable comfort, having dined excellently well, the fatigues and cares of arrival are forgotten, and there comes the imperative desire to sally forth to see in what manner of a city we are, and in what quarter thereof we are lodged.

In the confusion and excitement of our hurried ride from the station to the hotel, we had noted little save the oppressive distances and the all-pervading dust. The streets of Peking demand a chapter to themselves. The chapter should be written with a fountain-pen that would flow mud, and trace disgusting characters upon such crumpled scraps or

OUR ROOMS AT THE HÔTEL DU NORD

rags as would be rejected by the picker, and then the dust, born of the mud, should be sprinkled on to blot the writing lest it tell too much. The main streets that stretch from gate to gate are as broad and dusty as deserts, or as wide and wet as oceans, according to the weather. The narrow intervening alleys are usually nothing more than fetid ditches.

Our first experience of Peking streets was such as to impress itself forever on the memory. We had arrived in the late afternoon by the comparatively smooth and well-traveled streets that lead from the railway terminus to the legation quarter. The night came on darker than pitch before we had time to venture out in search of first impressions. Peking was new to us, and we could not sleep until

A PEKING PUDDLE

we had made more intimate acquaintance with its thoroughfares, and sniffed its oriental smells. "But no one ever ventures out at night," they tell us. "Why?—is it dangerous?" we ask. "No; there is not the slightest danger. The Chinese are completely cowed; but there is absolutely no place for you to go; the city is dead, and the streets are

empty, unlighted, and impassable.'' "Splendid!" we exclaim; "no danger and no lights; no people. Peking by night all to ourselves! Magnificent!"

Accordingly we order three rikishas, three men to every rikisha, and set out to cross the silent savage city and present our letters of introduction to one of the missionaries of the

THE HA-TA GATE

American Board whose address is so remote and so indefinite as to give to our projected outing the character of an exploring expedition into the depths of darkest Peking.

It is impossible to suggest by means of pictures made by day the impressions of that ride across Peking by night in utter darkness. Despite the superficial dustiness, we find

A THOROUGHFARE

that recent rains have rendered the streets almost impassable. At first our human horses found a little terra firma by hugging the walls, where at least one wheel would find a track, while the other wheel was lifted by the perspiring

RUTS

helpers over abysses that looked bottomless. I state it as a sworn fact that several times when it became necessary to cross the street, we dared not attempt to do so until a man had been sent out with *a sounding pole* to discover if there were a practicable ford across the thoroughfare at that point! To prove that this is not a too fantastic statement, one of the pictures shows the difference in level between the middle and the side of one of those streets. Imagine the upper road reduced to a ridge of almost fluent mud, as it would be in wet weather,—and the lower channel flooded as it is invariably after a heavy rain,—and you will agree that the *navigation* of the Peking streets by night is not without its difficulties and dangers. And then the bumps!—the ups and downs encountered even on the firmer border-strip that serves as sidewalk, and is usurped by the rikisha coolies.

THE WALKING IS WET

HIGH-WAY AND LOW-WAY

Imagine hovering in a rickety two-wheeled chair, in the blackness of night, on the brink of a mud-hole that may be bottomless for all that you can see — for as a rule you cannot see at all. Sometimes the rikisha drops squarely on two wheels with a sharp jolt on firm level ground; sometimes it sinks in yielding clay up to the axle; sometimes one tire strikes a rock and the other splashes into a pool of slimy ooze, from which the passenger is saved as if

AN ADVENTUROUS RIKISHA

by miracle, the coolies plunging in up to their knees and "boosting" the vehicle along until dry land is gained. These are not extraordinary incidents. We stopped counting similar hair-breadth escapes long before we reached our destination, which was the "*Fu*" or palace occupied by the American Board of Foreign Missions. The houses formerly occupied by the agents of the board had been of course destroyed by the Boxers, as one of the preliminaries of the

MUD

outbreak — the missionaries and their native converts taking refuge with the other foreigners in the legations.

MISSION OF THE AMERICAN BOARD

MISSIONARY QUARTERS

THE BUDDHA OF THE LAMA TEMPLE

We knocked repeatedly at the unlighted, temple-like portal of the Fu. At last an old Chinese appears, lantern in hand. We gather that the man we seek is not within; but as we turn to go, a cheery voice hails us, and from out the darkness of the street comes Mr. Stelle, returning from an evening visit to another mission. A long, intensely interesting talk of

BUDDHIST PRIESTS

recent misfortunes, struggles, and victories and of noble plans for nobler future battles with ignorance — then a return voyage in our jinrikisha, as eventful as the first.

We visited a few days later the site of the annihilated mission. There we found heaps of gray brick — all that remains of the many costly and commodious buildings. Who can blame the men who have seen the results of their life-labors reduced thus to heaps of charred and broken brick, for taking possession of the neighboring palace of a Tatar Prince, who was one of the chief instigators and backers of the Boxer movement? It is but justice that those who have lost all through the criminal connivance of the princes with the lawless element, should be sheltered by the very roof beneath which schemes were hatched for the

AT THE TEMPLE OF CONFUCIUS

WITH "LILY FEET"

destruction of the "foreign devil." Meantime the princely owner of the palace is traveling "for his health" in the remote interior provinces. We hear it often urged against missionary efforts, that China has a religion of her own, suited to her people,—that foreigners should not interfere with their beliefs. As for Buddhism, in the abstract it is beautiful —but to what depths of degradation is it not sunk in the Celestial Empire? There it is represented by a horde of ignorant, filthy priests, droning in the dilapidated temples, looking with hungry eyes at the inquisitive foreigners whom they pursue with savagely insistent demands for offerings of money. Playing upon the abject superstition of a populace

more ignorant than themselves, these shaven-pated Lamas are among the curses of the land. If one would be convinced of the utter demoralization of the priesthood of Gautama's faith, let him visit, as we did, the great Lama Temple in the far northeastern corner of the Tatar City, and study there the inane, vicious visages of the "holy men." It is like entering the haunt of birds of prey — now frightened into harmlessness, but retaining all the instincts of the vulture and the buzzard. Within the temple a Buddha — big as the Jupiter of the Acropolis — rises in its disdainful immensity above the petty thievery and fraud committed in his sacred name — a new curl of disdain added to his almost supercilious lip by

MANCHU WOMEN

the memory of recent depredations practiced by the invading Christians, who have carried off innumerable artistic knickknacks from his shrine. But even those who have no sympathy with mission-work confess that Buddhism has betrayed her trust in China — that Taoism has sunk to the level of fetish-worship, and that Confucianism is not and never has been more than an influence, tending at first to a higher life, but now become the chief impediment to the intellectual emancipation of four hundred million people. If one would know that there is no life in things Confucian, let him visit as we did the abandoned Temple of the Great Sage, and feel the chill of death that broods in those somber and forgotten courts. Even the irreligious must admit that China needs a new religion if only as *a means of escape* from the thralldom of tradition.

A cruel thralldom it is, that of Chinese tradition. One of the most painful proofs is — the martyred feet of Chinese women. Revolting to the foreign eye, the so-called "Lily

"COME AWAY, CHILDREN"

Feet" are deemed both beautiful and fashionable by four hundred million Asiatics. What matter the sufferings of the child?—her baby feet wrapped in the crippling bandages during the years of growth,—bandages that are folded tighter month by month as the violated little foot strives to assert its rights to live and grow—making childhood one long martyrdom of intense, never-remitting agony? What matter the inability of the crippled woman to move without a twinge of pain? She is a Chinese woman, and Chinese

A PEEP-SHOW

women must have "Lily Feet." The very walk of the Lily Footed lady—a stilted, uncertain toddle—betrays the suffering resulting from a simple promenade. Some cannot walk at all without a cane. And in this cruel custom she persists, despite the good example set by her sisters of the Manchu race, the wives and daughters of the conquering Mongols who subjugated China three centuries ago, imposed the pigtail on the men but did not take the bindings from the feet of women. A Manchu woman is distinguishable not

FANTASTIC SIGNS

only by her big natural feet, shod almost like the feet of men, but also by her curious coiffure, a fanciful arrangement of the hair rivaling in fantastic outline the capillary architecture of the Japanese mousmé or of the maiden of Moki Land.

Impression-gathering in the Peking streets is a delightful occupation. I cannot conceive of anybody being bored in Peking. For him who has eyes to see and ears to hear and a nose to smell there is, in the language of the continuous-

A PAILOW NEAR THE CHIEN-MEN

vaudeville advertisements, "something doing every minute." The common, continuous passing throng is in itself enough to hold the attention for hours at a time; and to vary its marvelous monotony of brown body, blue trousers, and upheld paper fan, there are the vehicles, of many sorts—the low carts laden high with military supplies, drawn by small ponies, driven by half-nude teamsters; the familiar, but ever-astonishing passenger-cart, with its blue arched

roof, its taut-stretched awning, shielding mule and driver, and its yellow wheels, tired with corrugated metal and thus equipped for the eternal task of filing deep grooves in the Peking pavements for other wheels to deepen, until the stones be cut in twain, and the roadway reduced to the Chinese ideal of what a road should be ("good for ten years and bad for ten thousand," runs the proverb); the frail jinrikishas, modern competitors of the perennial carts, with their

A BRIDAL-CHAIR

unhappy passengers, swaying and clutching at nothing as the bare-torsoed runners pull and propel the quivering vehicle over the rutted granite-blocks and through the abysmal puddles; the ambulances of the foreign armies, trim, well-equipped and, by contrast, stylish, serving as carriages of state for the commanders; the loud-voiced native wheelbarrows, squealing their woful song, uttering the mortal complaint of the poor dumb human brutes who push them:—

all these wheeled things go by as we stand watching and watching beneath one of those strange street arches known as "*pailows*," memorial structures erected in honor of some great or good personage of whom we never heard. Nor is this all, for in that ever-passing river of unfamiliar things, we now and then distinguish awkward dust-colored masses, moving slowly, rhythmically — they are the ships of the Asian deserts, fuller-rigged apparently than those of Africa, for the Mongolian camels are shaggy as lions. Then suddenly a

WORKING OUT A SENTENCE

glare of scarlet flashes in the crowd — it is a bridal-chair, borne swiftly toward the house of some expectant bridegroom, by carriers in festal garb; or, again, it is the somber green of an official chair, the equipage of one of the few princes left in Peking to parley and make peace with the intruders; or, turning once more to those who pass on foot, we see a miserable man wearing about his neck the heavy wooden collar of the criminal, which frames his haggard face, while upon it are pasted written papers, relating his offense. Meantime the uniforms of seven allied nations add spots of red and blue and khaki to the kaleidoscopic crowd;

and finally, to give a comic climax to it all, there dashes past the one unique conveyance of Peking, the contrivance of a foreign private soldier — a pony harnessed to a rikisha! and in Occidentalized Orientalism, that ingenious lad in khaki threads the maze of Peking — looking for all the world like a Norwegian peasant in a cariole!

The street life of Peking being so fascinating and dramatic a spectacle, it would seem a waste of time and money to patronize the theater. Yet we found it well worth while, if only for the sight of the half-nude audience perched on the

IN THE THEATER

comfortless seats — narrow benches without backs, no more luxurious than a string of carpenter's horses. But the Celestial has at least a few good practical ideas; he is sensible enough to take off his loose and scanty clothing when he attends the theater, while we put on our tightest and most cumbersome apparel. The play may be the thing — but in Peking as in the San Francisco China-town, noise is the only

thing distinguishable to the dazed foreigner; the din of gongs and cymbals is so loud and thick that one can almost *see* it.

From tragedy upon the stage we may turn in our swift shifting of Oriental scenes, to the passing of a spectacular funeral-procession. The hired mourners and attendants, arrayed in soiled and tawdry finery, carrying gay parasols

IN TAWDRY FINERY

and baldachins and banners, precede what looks to us at first like a compact group of football players in the throes of a protracted struggle. It is, however, only what is best described as a "gang" of pall-bearers, working in two shifts, for the coffin under which they struggle weighs more than a piano and the streets through which they advance so painfully are, when good, more than ankle-deep in mud, and when bad, bottomless. Were they to drop their burden, a premature interment would take place then and there!

One of the pleasantest of our experiences in Peking was our brief acquaintance with Mr. I. C. Yang, a Chinese gentleman. Mr. Yang, as the sign before his door announces, is a manufacturer of aërated waters. He is also proprietor of the largest general foreign-goods store in the Tatar City. We were introduced to this progressive manufacturer and merchant by the commander of the American

THE PALL-BEARERS

guard, whom Mr. Yang had served as interpreter on several occasions during the critical period just closing. He speaks English perfectly. In talking with him we forget his nationality, and speak to him of "the Chinese" and "the natives," as if Mr. Yang himself were of our race, not theirs. He is one of the few Orientals who seem to understand the Occidental point of view. He devoted several days of his valuable time to showing us about the town. His cart and

saddle-horses were at our disposal, his servants ran errands for us, and when he had not time to go with us, he sent an intelligent interpreter who "rikishawed" with us and talked for us as willingly and enthusiastically as an old friend. We had but to express our desire to see or do a given thing, and arrangements were made at once. Do we care to investigate a pawnshop? Mr. Yang is stockholder in one of the most

AN ELABORATE CATAFALQUE

prominent loan-establishments, and we are invited to take tea with the managing directors, in whose office we experience for the first time some of the curious forms of Chinese hospitality. Arriving hot and dusty from the glaring streets, our host greets us with a steaming towel, freshly wrung out in hot water, which we press to our faces, finding much comfort in this kindly custom. After the towel has made the complete round, tea is brewed in beautiful porcelain cups

MR. YANG

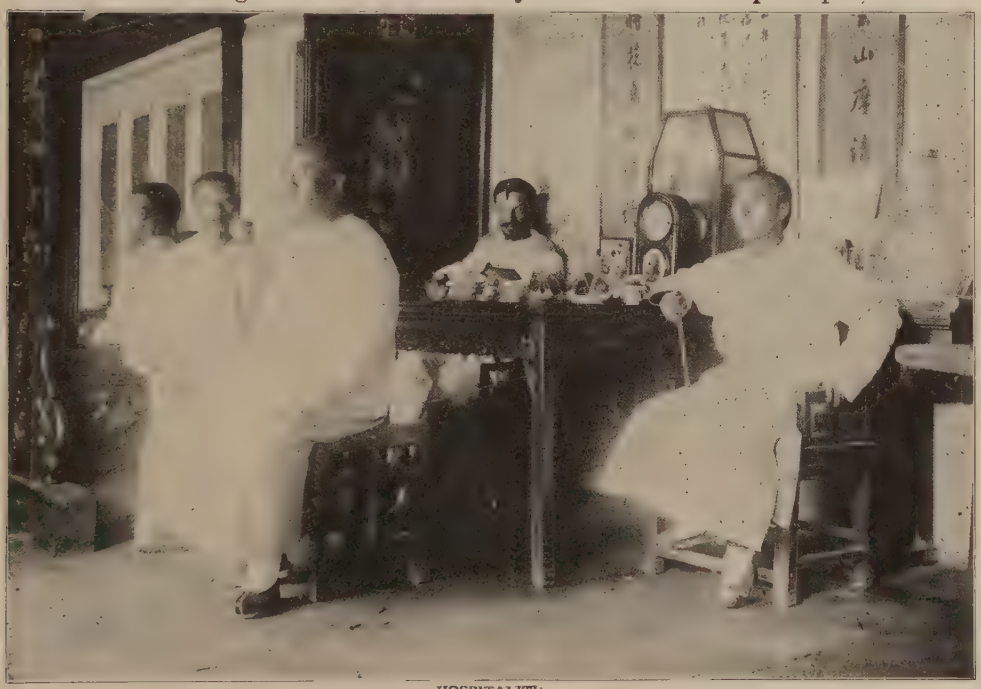
with covers on, the covers being used to hold back the leaves as we sip the fragrant infusion. Wedges of watermelon are then driven into what remains of our thirst, and finally, being thoroughly refreshed, we are escorted to the court, or compound, where the choicest articles belonging to our Chinese "uncles" have been spread out for our inspection. We select a few distingués snuff-bottles of jade, crystal, or cornelian, — all of them quaintly beautiful, but none of them quite equal to one that had caught our fancy in the office. We ask its price and find that it is priceless, for the owner refuses to sell it, but at the same time

A PROSPEROUS PAWN-SHOP

A WEIGHTY COFFIN

refuses to let us go away without it — he forces it upon us as a gift! The temptation was too great — we accepted it.

Then follows an invitation to dine at the best surviving restaurant in town; I say "surviving" because few of the fashionable establishments lived through the siege. There for the first time in our lives we eat a complete Chinese dinner. It was a revelation; new flavors, new gastronomic sensations; a cuisine utterly unlike our own, but no less highly developed — no less indicative of culinary skill, experience, and genius. I cannot tell you what we ate — perhaps it



HOSPITALITY

would not sound quite appetizing; in fact, we did not ask — we were content that nearly every dish was novel and delicious. I tasted here the most exquisite meat-flavor that has ever appealed to my palate. It was associated with a dainty slice of mutton, streaked with fat, but so much more

THE PROPRIETORS

delicious than any meat morsel I had ever eaten that it seemed as if I were tasting some new, unknown kind of food. The secret of its preparation I could not learn. We ate, of course, with chop-sticks, long wands of ebony; to clean them there were paper napkins, three inches square. Innumerable courses were brought on in confusing continuity. We tried one strange creation of the Chinese chef after another, and then went back to the beginning of the menu for "just one more" walnut fried in sugar, and one more lotus-bulb, or slice of pickled egg. As beverages there were hot tea and warm rice-wine, the latter poured from heavy pewter pots in form like tea-pots. To our surprise we lived to digest the dinner and tell the tale—and to regret that Celestial culinary skill should be handicapped by a disregard of cleanliness that would have shocked us had we not been fresh from the unwashed table-services of Siberia.

A CHINESE DINNER

Another Pekingese—a temporary resident—who shows us much kindly courtesy is a well-known correspondent whose dispatches to the Associated Press and Reuter's Agency keep the English-speaking world informed of what is going on in Peking. He has adapted a Chinese house of the middle-class to the needs of a fastidious bachelor, and dwells amid his books and papers, quietly, as behooves the man

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

whose profession is to listen to history as it is made, and to transmit what comes into his ears to expectant millions—who discuss it over their morning coffee on the other side of the globe. Despite the fact that Peking boasts the oldest daily paper in the world, the official *Peking Gazette*,

PROCLAMATION BY THE FOREIGN DEVILS

local journalism does not appear to be flourishing. The newspapers of Peking are found upon the walls in the form of placards—the latest proclamation being a warning from the new governor to those who are attempting to reawaken animosities, just as the late unpleasantness is drawing to a close. "Whereas," it read, "foolish men have stirred up

A FASHIONABLE RESTAURANT

strife and attacked the foreigners, calamities have been brought upon our people, therefore refrain, etc." But the proclamation that will be longest remembered was the one posted by the Allies after the occupation of the city. For the first time in the history of the capital, the Pekingese were addressed directly and authoritatively in the name of the government of the despised foreign devils. This extraordinary proclamation related to the Pekingese in very

GATE-HOUSE OF THE AMERICAN LEGATION

moderate and sober terms how they had been wicked, wrought havoc, and brought punishment upon themselves; it informed them that foreign troops would occupy their city until tranquillity should be restored, and it warned them that any future indiscretions would be even more severely dealt with. These historic posters were printed in the ordinary

THE OFFICIAL CART

Chinese fashion from a large wood block on which the complicated characters are cut by hand. The impressions are taken laboriously by pressing big sheets of paper upon the sculptured board which has been smeared with ink.

If there be one place in Peking that interests us more than another, it is the Legation of the United States. As we

MINISTER CONGER

THE WATER-GATE THROUGH WHICH THE FIRST OF THE RELIEF FORCE ENTERED

approach the gate-house, we note with interest the significant cuts and scratches made so recently by Chinese bullets. But

GATE-HOUSE OF THE BRITISH LEGATION

little damage was done here, for, as is indicated by the horizontal slashes in the brick and mortar, the hail of lead came from right and left, from the barricades thrown up by the Boxer assailants at the extremities of Legation Street.

In fact, in August, 1901, one year after the siege, there is little to remind us of that period of terror. Legation-life goes on as calmly and luxuriously as of yore. Even the women do not hesitate to ride abroad in the official pea-green cart. Peking is daunted, the Boxers are forgotten, and, for the present, to be a white man or woman is to command respect, and to inspire fear — in fact, to be almost a god in the eyes of the disgruntled natives, who have had at last a lesson that has made an indelible impression.

WALL OF THE BRITISH LEGATION

RESIDENCE OF THE AMERICAN MINISTER

We can scarcely realize that a few months before, the court-yard of our legation, where we now stroll about with one who was "among those present," was under almost continual fire. Had not the gallant little band of defenders, led by Meyers, taken and held the section of the Tatar Wall immediately in the rear of the legation, the place would have been untenable. Our minister, Mr. Conger, was one of the

A PEKING CARAVANSARY

towers of strength and courage during that awful period. One of the women who lived through the siege assured us that a word and a smile from Mr. Conger did the hungry defenders as much good as a beefsteak, that his cheery comments used to make palatable even the polo-pony cutlets and other war-time table luxuries. We found that people in Peking who know and value Mr. Conger were amazed at the criticism directed against him by a portion of the press at home.

PROCLAMATIONS

Although the American Legation was never abandoned to the Boxers, its inmates took refuge in the British compound, which was surrounded by a stouter wall. Moreover, the British Legation was more commodious; it was farther from the city gates where the Chinese guns were mounted, and it fronted on a canal which served it as a moat. A glance at one corner of that improvised fortress shows how severely it suffered from the effects of shot and shell. Sandbags still lie thick on the top of the wall, telling of the defensive industry of the besieged — and there upon the seared and riven wall some thoughtful survivor of the siege has traced the words, "Lest we forget."

At every turn we note reminders of the struggle—stones chipped by shells—the scattered débris of recently demolished barricades and the scaffoldings of buildings in reconstruction, for the surrounding quarter, save the buildings immediately adjacent to the center of the defense, was utterly destroyed by incendiary fires. The property loss was enormous; the loss in life among the Europeans, about threescore. It seems incredible that the legations should have withstood for fifty-six days the combined attack of the mobs and of the military forces of the Chinese government whose cannon dominated the entire foreign quarter. It would appear that had the Chinese dared to make a real assault before the defenses were developed, the legations could have

IN THE BRITISH COMPOUND

been taken in a day. But the braggart Boxers were content to bang away from the security of barricaded walls, and to assemble multitudes in the surrounding streets to terrify the foreign devils with their insistent cries of "*Sha, sha!*" "Kill, kill!" If crying could kill Christians, Chinese Christendom would be to-day depopulated — for the melodrama of the siege was played to a demoniac chorus of murderous cries and mutterings from a fanatic populace.

The defenders need no eulogy, their deeds speak for them. Men who were men, and women who were more than men — dared and suffered and fought and lived when it had been far less laborious and far less brave to die.

The defense and relief of the Legations occupied so completely the public mind that little attention was given at the

A LEGATION RESIDENCE

REMINDERS OF THE SIEGE

time to the separate siege and ultimate tardy deliverance of the Pei Tang, the Cathedral and Mission of the French Catholics. Under the direction of the venerable Bishop of Peking, Monseigneur Favier, the Catholic flock, to the number of about three thousand, held at bay the hostile population of Peking for two long months; for the siege of the Pei Tang began before that of the Legations. Moreover, relief was later in reaching that faithful band of French Fathers, Sisters of Mercy, and their helpless charges and converts, the Chinese women and children, who thronged the spacious buildings of the Catholics' vast enclosure. Fortunately a military guard had been sent to them at the last moment,—thirty French and ten Italian marines;—and with

THE WORK OF SHOT AND SHELL

the forty rifles thus providentially secured, the Pei Tang Christians prevailed against an army and a mob. The church was bombarded continuously for twenty-four consecutive days, during which time more than two thousand shells and cannon-balls fell within the mission walls. They were called upon to defend more than fourteen hundred meters of

THE PEI TANG

walls! The enemy used every means, save courage, to compass their destruction. A forlorn-hope of priests and wounded marines, led by a bishop, made a sortie, and actually took a cannon from the despicable enemy. Burning brands were shot over the walls; but the resulting fires were extinguished by the weary, watchful, famished defenders;

EFFECT OF A MINE EXPLOSION

ONE OF THE SISTERS

breaches made by the Chinese, who were countless, were blocked again by the Christians whose number hourly grew less.

Then mines were laid, and despite the efforts of the defenders to meet them with counter-mines, four of them were successfully completed and exploded with horrible effect.

SITE OF THE ASSASSINATION OF THE GERMAN MINISTER

We never before realized what could be done by the explosion of a subterranean mine; but one glance at the gaping crater near the Cathedral gave us a thrill of horrified amazement and of indignation. We saw a cavity big as a house, marking the spot where one of those artificial volcanoes, made by the cunning Orientals, had vomited death and destruction, annihilating the hospital of the Sisters of Mercy, killing and mangling more than a hundred people, including fifty-three sick native children. Subsequent explosions caused a total of four hundred deaths!

At the Pei Tang, women were in the majority, but, as one of the sisters said, when we expressed surprise at this, "Yes; there were many women; that in itself was an element of strength, it gave more courage to our defenders."

The shattered and defaced Cathedral is, however, being rapidly restored; many of the laborers now shaping the new stones or reshaping the old ones, being the very Boxer fanatics who a year before were battering down its walls. Although it was on Sunday that we visited the Pei Tang, the chisels were playing their industrious staccato round about the house of worship; and ere long the imposing façade will again dominate, with its Christian emblems, the rebellious pagan city whose citizens love not the sight of it.

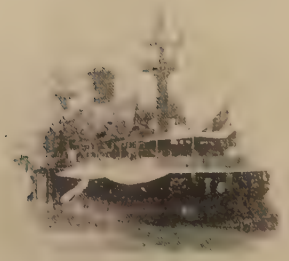
Peking will not be without conspicuous reminders of the futility of her attempt to cast out the hated alien.

The restored splendor of the Catholic Temple; the great memorial "Pailow," erected in the Ha-Ta Street at the cost of the Chinese government, to mark the site of the

THE NEW GERMAN BARRACKS

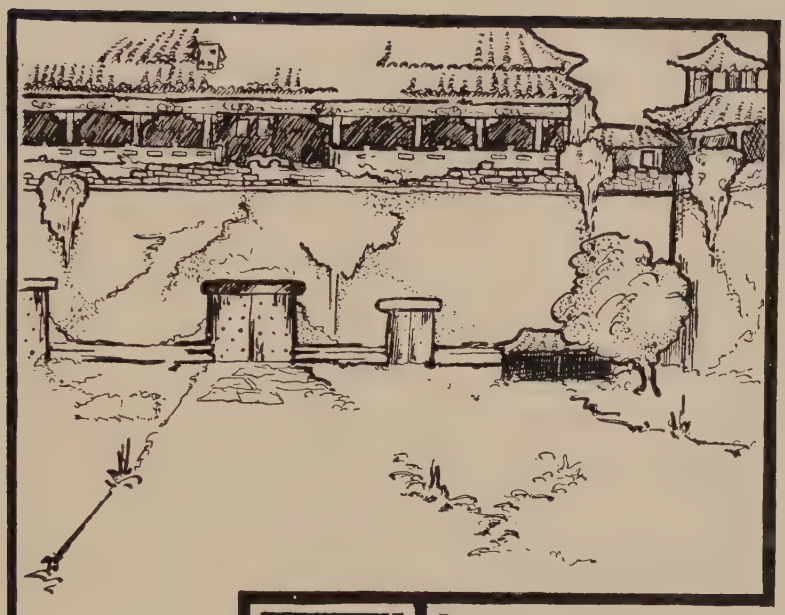
assassination of the German Minister; the new railway-stations in the shadow of the Tatar Wall — these structures bear witness to the fact that assaults upon the representatives of the foreigner's religions, governments, and enterprises, can avail nothing: cannot but bring humiliation to the Pekingese. But even more significant to the eyes of the now pacified population of Peking is the new aspect of the legation-quarter, for it has been transformed into an international fortress. Germany has erected spacious barracks for five hundred men in an enclosure that is practically defensible; the United States has provided similar quarters for a hundred and fifty men. Other nations are preparing to garrison Peking with what is virtually an army of defense — under the euphonious title of "Legation Guards."

Western Civilization has profited by the lesson of 1900. Will China profit by the lesson of 1901?



正萬邦慎厥身脩思永
克寬克仁皇建其有極
興無輕民事惟艱

THE FORBIDDEN CITY



The Forbidden City

PEKING is paradoxical. It is one of the ugliest cities in the world—it is one of the most beautiful. It is hideous, squalid, abject, and it is at the same time lovely, magnificent, and glorious.

Looked at from the level of the toiler in the filthy thoroughfares, Peking seems an interminable sprawling village, semi-ruinous, poverty-stricken, unspeakably dilapidated.

Viewed from the massive towers of the City Gates, from the broad ramparts or from the once prohibited and semi-sacred artificial hills in the Imperial City, Peking reveals

SIDE ARCH OF THE CHIEN-MEN

itself to the amazed onlooker as a splendid wall-girt metropolis, perfectly preserved, fabulously elegant, incredibly artistic, unutterably superb.

We have already seen the Peking of the miserable many, formerly the only Peking known to the alien intruder. We are now to see the once invisible Peking of the "Son of Heaven," the Peking of the Celestial princes, and imperial ministers—the Peking of the privileged and semi-sacred few. Peking is planned upon a grander scale than any of the world's great capitals.

Our cities have grown and spread haphazard; and,

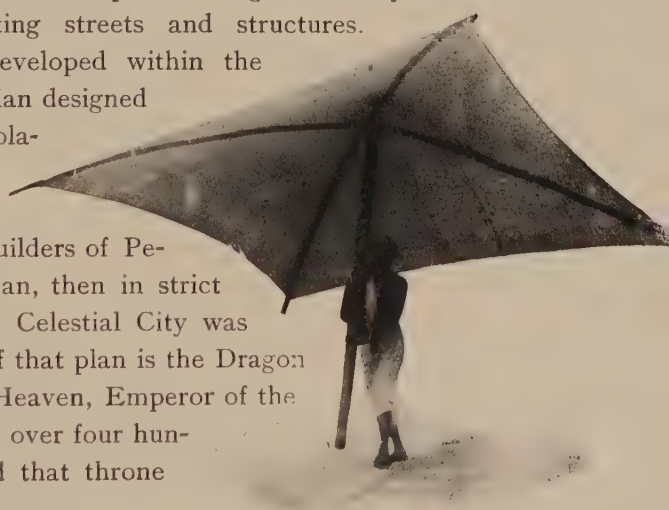
THE CHIEN-MEN

PANORAMA FROM THE SOUTH GATE

THE TATAR WALL

having waxed rich, plans have been devised to give them beauty and symmetry, these plans being invariably subservient to the existing streets and structures.

But Peking has developed within the rigid limitations of a plan designed to emphasize the inviolability and sanctity and glory of the Imperial Person. The builders of Peking first evolved a plan, then in strict accordance with it the Celestial City was created. The center of that plan is the Dragon Throne of the Son of Heaven, Emperor of the Middle Kingdom, ruler over four hundred millions. Around that throne



A PEKING PARASOL

are ranged the palaces of the Forbidden City—an isolated parallelogram of splendor, shut in by jealous walls of purple hue, having a circuit of two and a quarter miles.

Outside of this, on four sides of the square, are spread the leafy groves, the lotus-lakes, the islands and the parks, the hills and the shrines, and the aristocratic dwellings of the Imperial City,—a spacious enclosure, irregular in form, surrounded in turn by a wall that has a circuit of six miles.

PANORAMA OU

Beyond that wall lie the wide precincts of the Tatar City, the vast, nearly square Manchu metropolis, bounded on four sides by a mighty wall, fourteen and one-fourth miles around, of inconceivable massiveness, rising like a mountain-range of geometric outline between the inner desolation that is Peking —the stronghold of the Manchu masters,—and the outer desolation that is China—the toil-cursed land of a subject race. From this wall, which is about fifty feet high and has

a level summit forty feet in width, huge buttresses are thrown out at intervals of sixty yards.

To north, east, and west the level, well-tilled country stretches away toward the Great Wall, the seashore, the mountains, and the desert; but along the south side of the Tatar citadel lies another walled wilderness of houses—another parallelogram of squalor and splendor. It is the Chinese City, nearly as vast and populous as the Tatar City,

TH GATE

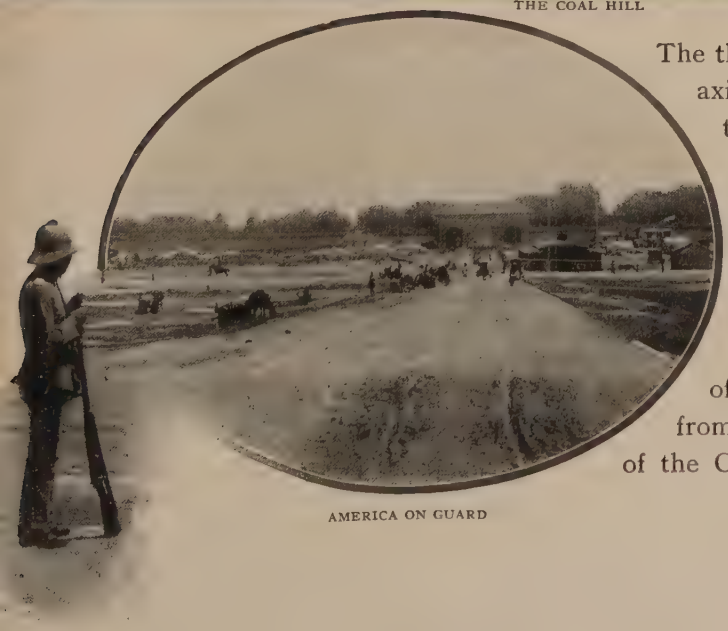
for the slightly less-imposing wall, that, branching from the corners of the Manchu fortifications, completes the defenses of this great enclosed suburb, is ten miles long.

Thus the ramparts that enclose the dual city have a total length of nearly twenty-five miles. And in the creation of these walls, and of nearly all things within them, the builders have kept always in view their relative position to that of the Dragon Throne, in the innermost Forbidden City.

INSIDE THE TATAR WALL

INVADING RAILS

THE COAL HILL



AMERICA ON GUARD

The throne is in the very axis of the two cities; the principal gates in the great walls are in that same axis — the axis itself being represented by the chief thoroughfare of Peking, extending from the South Gate of the Chinese City to the

THE HA-TA GATE

THE OLD AND THE NEW

SOUTHWARD FROM THE HA-TA GATE

successive gates of the "prohibited" region, whence it is continued by the stone-paved approaches that lead through countless other gates and courts to the flights of marble steps that ascend to the "Hall of Highest Peace," within which, raised upon a dais of red and golden lacquer, rests the central object of the Celestial Capital—the Imperial

FROM BRITISH INDIA

Chair of Manchu majesty. Until the foreign invaders, in 1901, broke down the barriers of tradition and penetrated to the very heart of this unseen abode of the Invisible, it was one of the world's mysteries, guarded by the world's most wonderful walls. But quite as wonderful as the old walls. quite as epoch-marking, and quite as significant of conquests

INDIAN TONGAS

A BLUE-TILED TEMPLE

and of changed conditions are the British rails that are now being laid by stolid native toilers in the shadow of the medieval ramparts. Through the breach, near the Ha-Ta gate, express-trains from St. Petersburg will glide within a year or two. A passenger-station is now building

RIKISHA COOLIES

immediately behind the American legation, but separated from it by the Tatar Wall; and although the Empress has several times ordered the tracks removed and work upon the buildings stopped, Imperial orders appear to be of no avail; the road is in Peking to stay. Peking is already a Transcontinental Terminal; it awaits only the organization of through services. Sleeping-cars from Paris will erelong impede the passing Peking bar-

A MANCHU FAMILY

rows, those clumsy, creaky bicycles of Cathay, and the Mongolian camels will soon become accustomed to the locomotive.

At the Ha-Ta gate we may ascend a ramp that leads by gentle inclines to the summit of the wall, whence we look southward into the Chinese City. It appears like a wilderness of roofs, low and irregular. There are few landmarks

THE CENTER OF THE UNIVERSE

rising above its dull monotony, save the monstrous walls that bound it, the towering city-gates, and the Temple of Heaven isolated in a vast silent park, one mile square, in the southeastern quarter. That sacred enclosure to which no foreigner had been admitted for many years, served during the occupation as the military headquarters of the British. It was at the time of our visit, in 1901, the camping-ground of

IN THE PARK OF HEAVEN

the Bengal Lancers. But being white men we pass freely almost everywhere in Peking. The British-Indian troopers invariably salute respectfully; white soldiers give us right of way, and the Chinese are still too frightened to protest at any profanation of their sacred places. We follow a long shaded avenue that leads us to a graceful, blue-tiled temple, resting on its marble base like a lacquered jewel casket upon a stand

IN THE SACRED PARK

of alabaster. Though sharing the neglect common to all things Pekingese, the shrine is wonderfully well preserved, its beauty possibly enhanced by the green things that are sprouting from the roof tiles and from the marble pavement. Directly south of it rises the most sacred altar in all China, the "Altar of Heaven," where the Emperor, surrounded by his court, makes annual supplication to the only power that he regards as higher than himself. The altar, like the

THE AL

THE TEM

AVEN

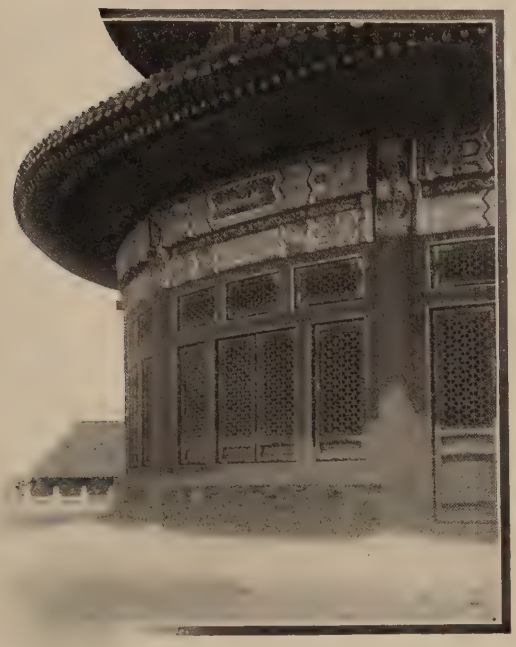
E ALTAR OF HEAVEN

courtyard, is paved with marble slabs, the central disk being regarded as the very center of the universe. Formerly as inaccessible to the ordinary mortals as the north pole itself, this unique spot now feels the daily touch of foreign heels and the soft tread of barefoot Chinese coolies, who attend the desecrating visitors. And as we stoop and look intently at that marble disk, we find to our amazement and amusement

THE TEMPLE OF HEAVEN

that a "Tommy Atkins" autograph is scratched there on the stone that marks the Middle of Creation! Nearby we find a group of metal braziers and a sort of furnace, still choked with the half-cremated carcass of a sacrificial animal, the odor of which offends even our rikisha runners.

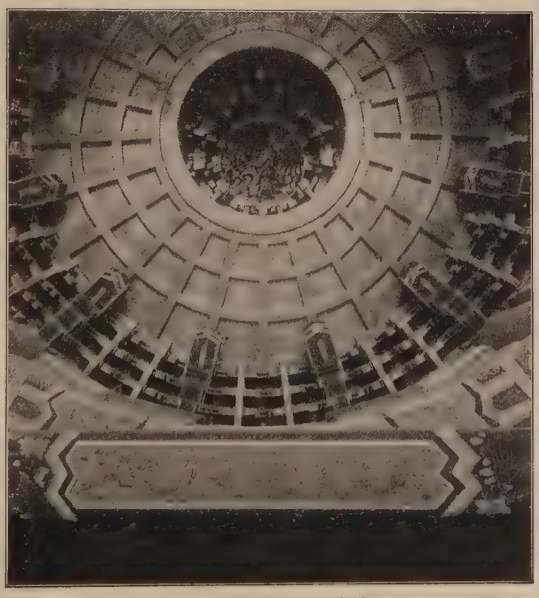
GATE TO THE TEMPLE OF HEAVEN



EXQUISITE DETAIL

The rikisha men of the present are enjoying undreamed-of privileges. They are always eager to be chosen as camera-bearers for these excursions into the forbidden regions, yet they are half afraid to look on these things, lest on the return of the Imperial court they be punished for having dared to violate with the gaze of common men the holy places of the capital.

A similar marble construction, called the "Altar of Prayer for Grain," rises a few hundred yards to the north; it is crowned by a three-roofed temple, the most beautiful piece of architecture in Peking. It is called the "Temple of Heaven," and though the cult to which it is dedicated is the most ancient religion known in China, the temple itself was built only ten years



A MARVELOUS CEILING

ago, to replace an earlier structure that had been destroyed by fire. Exquisite indeed are the details. The ceiling is one of the most elaborate and beautiful I have ever seen; the rich and harmonious decoration of the walls proves that Chinese art is not yet dead, that Chinese architects and painters have not failed of their artistic inheritance from

AN ARTISTIC STAIRWAY

the masters of the olden time. Nor have the Chinese sculptors lost their cunning. Witness the delicate treatment of the marble balustrade, the strong pictorial treatment of the huge marble slabs that break the stiff lines of the four stairways of approach. These decorative panels are not, however, merely ornamental. They form what is called "The

BEHIND THE TEMPLE

Imperial Path" for the sacred feet of the ruler who must not tread the steps like ordinary mortals; "the Son of Heaven" ascends the inclined marble plane, trampling upon the carven dragons. And Nature, too, has done her part to beautify this place of worship, where prayers are breathed for fertility and increase; for she has planted, with

GATE OF THE TEMPLE OF AGRICULTURE

AN AMERICAN SENTRY

rare discrimination, bouquets of green at just the proper places to soften the geometrical rigidity of this characteristically Chinese composition. And lest the pictures fail to convey an impression of the isolation of these altars and temples and of the vastness of the secluded park in the midst of which they stand, let me repeat that they are separated from the haunts of men by walls which have a circuit of four miles. But

THE STARS AND STRIPES

those walls are, of course, within the city walls of Peking, as are also the walls surrounding the neighboring "Temple of Agriculture," which served during the occupation as the American military headquarters. We find there only the legation guard — one hundred and fifty men of the Ninth Infantry, ready, however, to vacate the sacred buildings on the completion of the new barracks in Legation Street. The Temple of Agriculture is another of the forbidden places of Peking; its spacious precincts were sacred to the Imperial Son of Heaven, who came here every year to put his own hand to the plow, to turn eight furrows as an example to his people. His ministers then emulated the Imperial act, thus setting the seal of official approval upon agricultural pursuits.

THE ALTAR OF AGRICULTURE

We come to this heretofore unseen place of rites and secret ceremonies to take tea with the wife and daughters of the American commander, who have improvised a home in the most sacred temple.

SACRED BARRACKS

It seemed a very simple matter to roll in here in a rikisha, and in the course of conversation to ask Major Robertson for a permit to visit the Forbidden City guarded by his men. But as we ride away with the coveted paper in our possession, we realize that what we have already done and are about to do in Peking, are things which a year before no foreigner would have dared to dream of doing. The traveler who reached Peking in the first year of the twentieth century

was fortunate indeed. Doors that had been closed for hundreds of years, stood open. The empty mysteries of Peking's palaces and temples were bared to the gaze of any man who cared to peer into the dark recesses of a past that, shrouded in the dust of ages, had never ceased to be the present. In China we find the anomaly of a present that is in reality the past—and of a past that still remains the present. The thought is vague and—since we speak of China—most appropriate. Vagueness is a Chinese characteristic; even the streets of Peking are vague—so vague that sometimes children lose their lives by falling, unnoticed, into abysmal mud-puddles. Were you to judge Peking after seeing only its dirty streets and tumbledown constructions, you would probably declare it the most hideous and repellent city in the world. This is a misconception, based upon a too minute acquaintance with insignificant details. True, the thoroughfares are not in perfect order, nor are the dwellings kept in

A FANTASTIC MONUMENT

good repair; yet, as I have already said, Peking in certain aspects is the most lovely city in the world, a paradise of beauty, verdure, and magnificence. In the Imperial Park the muddy sloughs give place to lotus-ponds; the crumbling gates to graceful marble bridges, the dingy pailows to green-tiled gates resplendent in lacquered coats of

IN THE IMPERIAL CITY

many colors, while monuments of strange undreamed-of forms crown graceful artificial heights, and offer points of vantage that command entrancing views. Among them is one of the loveliest vistas that I have ever beheld—a vista of the Lake of Lotus and the Marble Bridge—a bridge of

LAKE OF LOTUS AND THE MARBLE BRIDGE

spotless marble spanning a sea of green, where waves of lotus-leaves are flecked with the white foam of lotus-flowers. Soft outlines, luxuriant verdure, and luxurious pavilions complete the picture, and help it to blot out from memory the horrid vistas of the sordid streets so near and yet so far removed from this enchanted region.

The eye can turn in all directions without meeting an ugly outline or an ungraceful curve. Peking viewed from above appears supremely and completely beautiful. Moreover, it appears to be, at least from certain heights, not a city at all, but a carefully groomed forest. We are amazed to see how many trees are hidden in the courtyards, invisible from the streets; revealed only to the privileged spectator

IN THE IMPERIAL CITY

who surveys the city from points where in other days only princes were supposed to stand. The most conspicuous height within the walls is called the Me Chan, or "Hill of Coal," for it is said to be a heap of coal accumulated there by the Emperors of old as if in preparation for a siege. No one has yet sunk shafts in the reputed carbon pyramid to

APPROACH TO THE HILL OF COAL

determine the truth or falsity of the tradition. Upon the summit is a pavilion which is in a direct line with the northern and southern gates and the long range of Imperial palaces; this pavilion, formerly inaccessible, commands a superb panorama of the Forbidden City. The purple-walled Forbidden City, with its innumerable structures, roofed with

THE FORBIDDEN CITY FROM THE HILL OF COAL

bright yellow tiles, with its vast, complicated, yet symmetrical groupings of palaces and halls, gates and temples, covered corridors and isolated courtyards, is one of the most marvelous, most fascinating, and most mysterious enclosures in the world. I say "mysterious," but it is so no longer;

NORTHWARD FROM THE COAL HILL

its mystery is no more; it evaporated in the smoke of Reilly's guns; but its beauty, splendor, and fascination remained to delight all who were fortunate enough to reach Peking during the days when the gate to the Forbidden City was held by the Ninth U. S. Infantry, successors by right of

WEST MOAT OF THE FORBIDDEN CITY

NINTH INFANTRY, U. S. A.

conquest to the Chinese Imperial Guard who formerly loitered at the threshold toying with obsolete weapons.

War brought strange doorkeepers to the palace of the Son of Heaven. Who would have dreamed, a few years ago, that permits to visit the Forbidden City of Peking, then

NORTHWEST ANGLE OF THE PURPLE WALL

never violated by foreign intrusion, could be had in 1901 on application to an officer of the Ninth U. S. Infantry?

But before we present our permit let us glance once more at the imposing ensemble of the Imperial citadel as it appears to the spectator standing by the curious urn-like monument that crowns the hill upon the island in the Lake of Lotus. The approach to the Dragon Throne leads through a long

series of gates and courts, beginning with the first yellow-tiled portal on our extreme right. It is a gate to the Imperial City, as is likewise a second of similar construction ; the third is the main portal to the innermost enclosure, called "Forbidden." Then follow, always in the axis of those marvelous parallelograms of the double city, a series of great

LIKE WAVES OF YELLOW TILES

halls or audience chambers behind which, on the left side of the picture, are the gardens and family temples of the Emperor. The private apartments are in the low buildings adjacent to the western walls. (See illustration opposite.)

Bearing this plan in mind, we approach the outer gate through the middle arch of which the second gate is visible.

PANORAMA OF THE FORBIDDEN CITY

Let us advance as rapidly as possible, for the approach is long, and we have still many hundred yards to go before we reach the next imposing portal. How splendid in conception was this scheme for lending awesome dignity to the Imperial dwelling-place! The long wide courts are, even in decay, tremendously impressive. In olden days the ambassadors of

APPROACHING THE FORBIDDEN CITY

China's tributaries — Korea, Mongolia, and Tibet must have felt that they were indeed approaching the abode of the very Master of the Universe. The second portal loses naught of its impressiveness as we draw nearer; if anything, it seems more lordly and forbidding than before. From fantastic sculptured columns of white marble, cloud-shaped wings

A FANTASTIC BEAST

stand out, their flutterings fixed in marble—strange of form, immobile, unalterable, and age-worn, like the thoughts of the Chinese. Marble bridges curve gracefully over an empty moat; seared war-stained walls, the color of dried blood, rise to a half-demolished marble balustrade whence reddish pillars spring

AN IMPOSING APPROACH

THE OUTER GATE

ONE OF THE MANY OUTER GATES TO THE FORBIDDEN CITY

to the upholding of a double roof, covered, like all the roofs of the Imperial buildings, with tons of heavy yellow tiles. But underneath all this we may pass freely and

THE GREAT GATE OF THE FORBIDDEN CITY

RELIEVING SENTRY AT GATE OF FORBIDDEN CITY

MARBLE STAIRWAYS

find ourselves in still another court — at the far end of which rises still another gate, similar to the last, but higher and flanked by wings and towers, — all of which show the marks of foreign shot and shell. Awed by the savage, frowning splendor of this "Gate to the Invisible," we draw near to

ENTRANCE TO THE FORBIDDEN CITY

demand admission, wondering what manner of guardian will confront us at the low tunnel-like portal. We should not have been surprised had we been repulsed by a monster or a dragon. No sentry would be too fantastic or too terrible for such a portal — and yet there stands a sentry too fantastic for belief — no grinning, awful creature, no awe-inspiring

PANORAMA

giant, but simply a smiling, tired looking, khaki-clad Hoosier boy, who hails from some unknown little town on the banks of the Wabash, very far away. But there he stands with power to admit and to exclude, for the time being virtually dictator of the situation, in absolute control of the palace of the Emperor of China, who claims to be the Son of Heaven,

and master of the lives and destinies of a third part of the inhabitants of the earth. But, as the sentry confidentially informs us, "It 's a darn dull job!"

Beyond this gate another court, with marble bridges, terraces, and balustrades, monotonously like the bridges, terraces, and balustrades we have already seen. This is the

COURT OF THE FORBIDDEN CITY

first court of the Forbidden City, the threshold of mystery, the verge of the unseeable. Even now this court is neutral territory between the American and Chinese lines; for while our soldiers command the outer gate, the inner gate is held by the servants of the Emperor, left to care for, and, if possible, to protect, the sacred palaces. They hold the keys and

keep the doors jealously closed, but are compelled to throw them open at the command of the American private who accompanies all visitors. There is considerable delay; the sleek, uncanny personages in imperial employ are evidently distressed at the thought of another profanation of their secluded stronghold by another band of prying, inquisitive,

A BEAST OF BRONZE

uncontrollable "barbarians." Nevertheless, needs must. The huge door, with protesting creakings, is at last swung open and the eunuchs with fawning smiles offer us tiny cups of fragrant tea which we accept with some reluctance.

We are amazed at the cordiality of our reception; but in the words of the American private, "These here ducks are

BRONZE GUARDIANS AND GILDED CALDRONS

THE EUNUCHS SERVING TEA TO VISITORS

REFRESHMENTS AT THE GATE

so glad that we ain't murdered 'em that they always treat our folks fine." Preceded by two Imperial officials and followed by a group of those tall, timidly effeminate retainers, we make our way through court after court, mounting more marble stairways, passing through a succession of stately audience-halls, descending other stairways at the rear — until it seems as if there were no end to this Forbidden City.

IMPERIAL SERVANTS

And to our surprise, there is no center, or rather, there are three centers; for the throne which stands in the midst of this secluded city is not unique, it is triple. There are three great thrones, rising like ornate altars in the religious dimness of three vast temple-like, and almost vacant halls of

HALL OF THE THRONE

AN AUDIENCE-HALL

A PAVILION

audience. Through the first throne-room we pass, only to find ourselves in another stone-paved court, bounded on the northern side by a second huge impressive structure, beyond which lies another court, upon which a third throne-hall looks down. In each courtyard are floods of shimmering sunshine, agitated by the heat waves rising from the gray

WRACK AND RUIN

stone flags and the white marble terraces; and on four sides the gracefully majestic upward sweep of those splendid curving roofs, sheathed in their time-defying armor of enameled yellow tiles; in each hall of audience the dimness, stillness, and coolness of a sepulchral cavern. This is the first impression. Then, as the darkness melts before the eagerness of

our gaze, we become conscious of a host of huge columns of reddish gold, which, rising from a refuse-strewn floor, are lost in the confusion of the carven nightmare overhead, where dragons writhe and threaten amid the sculptured beams and rafters. Despite the impatience of the attendants we linger to examine things hitherto unseen by foreign eyes.

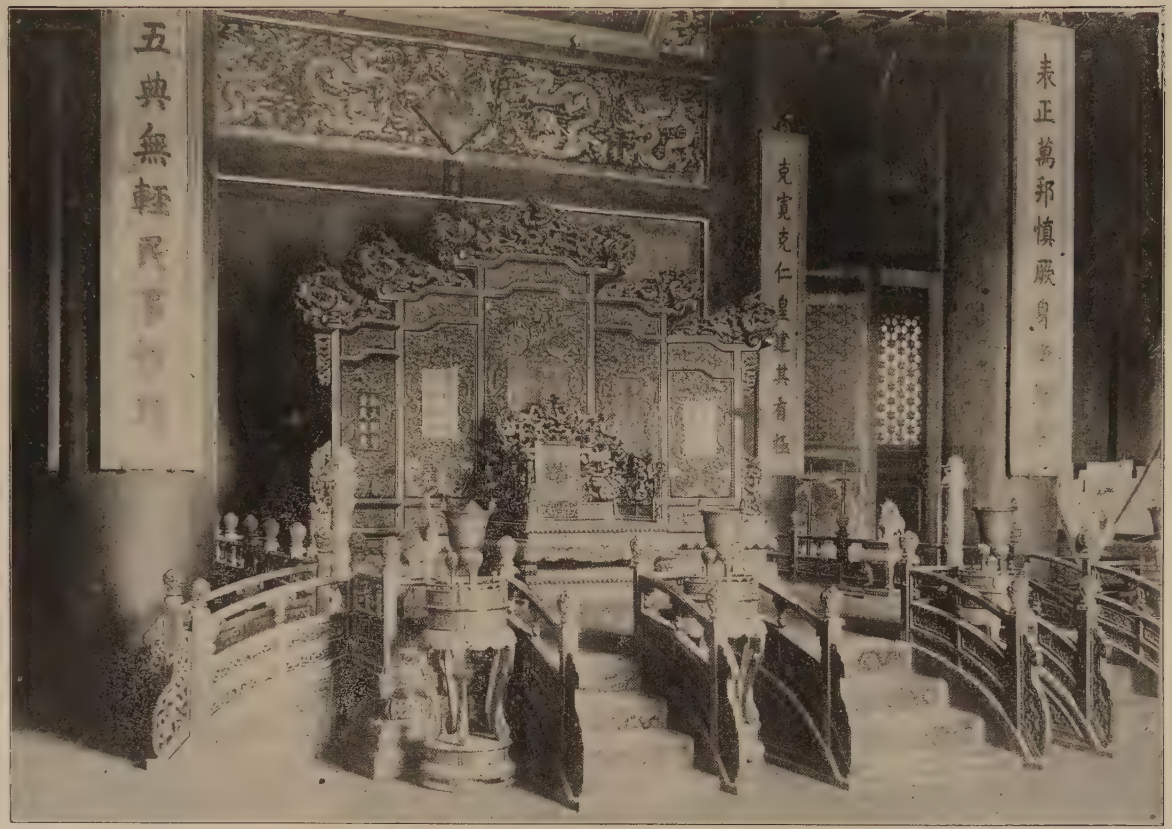
THE DRAGON THRONE

The hall is vacant save for the throne raised on an elaborate platform, approached by several little flights of steps bordered by railings of red lacquer. To right and left are ornaments in gilded bronze and bluish cloisonné — incense-burners, and vases, tortoises and storks, set each upon a table or a stand of lacquer, ebony, or teak elaborately carved.

The throne itself is so delicately and so deeply sculptured that it might almost be said to be the immaterial ghost of the rare wood from which it was evolved by some unknown chiseler, whose skill was equaled only by his patience. Behind the most gorgeous of those seats of the mighty in one of the three throne rooms, rises a screen of golden lacquer, so exquisitely dainty in design and execution that it appears to be a bas-relief of lace woven in threads of gold.

IN THE EMPEROR'S GARDEN

But lest a wrong impression be conveyed, remember that all these splendid things are old — not with the mellow oldness of time, but with the hopeless oldness of neglect. Photography is always kind to things that have lost their freshness, — from professional beauties to Imperial thrones, — and these soiled and dingy halls appear in pictures as splendid as when they were first built, three hundred years ago. But in



THE CHAIR OF CHINESE MAJESTY

reality they are in a sad condition, the rich soft carpets are soiled and torn, covered with a layer of dust and refuse several inches deep; wild birds nest amid the rafters and on our entrance fill the dim fantastic void above us with their frightened flutterings. The lacquered railings of the dais are cracked and broken; everything tells of a long period of

BEHIND THE TEMPLE

abandonment and gross neglect. All this is not the result of the foreign occupation. When the conquerors first entered the Forbidden City, they found it polluted with the dirt of a decade and cursed by the mal-administration of the corrupt palace officials. Only the gilded great thrones of the Son of Heaven stand forth almost untarnished amid this

dilapidation. Would that Christendom when she was mistress here in 1901 had dared to do right. Dared restore the Emperor — who although young and inexperienced, had tried a few years before to assert himself and to prove himself a champion of progress — to his rightful throne; dared to surround him with wise, enlightened counselors, insuring thus the

THE ABODE OF THE "SON OF HEAVEN"

advent of the reign of enlightenment and justice, that a new era might begin at last for China. The emancipation from Ignorance of four hundred million people should have been the first indemnity claimed by the conquerors. But Civilization, as we are proud to call it, is not yet thoroughly civilized. The war which should have done so much for China,

ended with profit and dishonor to many of the victors, but with glory to very few and with lasting benefit to none.

Behind that imposing suite of structures designed for public ceremonies we find the private gardens of the Emperor, rich in fantastic conceits—stones of odd shapes, lions, and dragons of ferocious mien, beautiful bronze incense-burners,

COURTYARD OF THE EMPEROR'S DWELLING

and curiously carved monuments and tablets. There is also a tree said to be older than the palace; it supports the weight of its five centuries only by the aid of props. After glancing into a temple so dark that we could scarcely distinguish the mob of deities massed inside of it, we are led through many high-walled alley-ways and many yellow-tiled

gates to the private dwellings of the Emperor and of the Empress Dowager. They consist each of a suite of buildings glass-walled and transparent as aquariums, surrounded on all sides by stone-paved courts and covered galleries and corridors. Bronze phenixes and dragons, and gilded water-jars and finely chiseled incense-burners, give to these courts the air of a museum, while the interior rooms are furnished with so many clocks as to suggest that His Celestial Majesty Kwang-Su shares the passion of Louis the Sixteenth for fantastic, extraordinary, and ingenious time-pieces. We counted in one room twenty-seven clocks, and there were four gigantic clocks on the adjacent veranda; and doubtless many of the smaller and more precious ones had been

SPLENDID BRONZES

abstracted or concealed in closets. We are allowed, or rather we presumed, to enter the very sleeping-chamber of the sacred Emperor. We look upon the couch where he

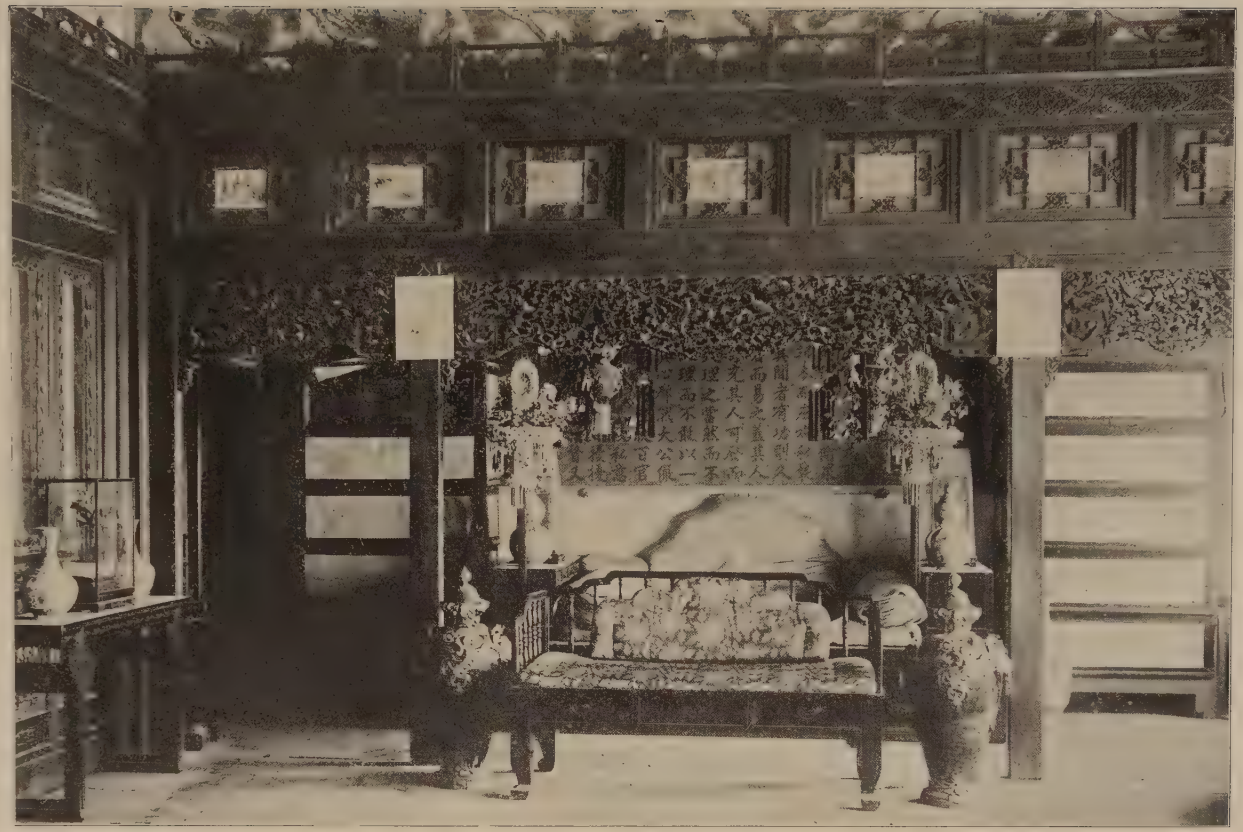
SLEEPING-CHAMBER OF THE EMPEROR

once dreamed his dream of an independent and progressive reign, where doubtless he has tossed in the insomnia born of disappointment and of the bitter consciousness of his ambitious helplessness. We force the unwilling attendants to open a tempting little door that leads into a sort of play-house,—a suite of tiny closet-like apartments, low ceiled and cosy and mysterious,—a fascinating hiding-place for the now childish, overawed, and will-less youth whose kingdom covers one fourth of the habitable globe, whose subjects represent

one third of the earth's habitants. He is now little better than a prisoner in the hands of that marvelous old woman who for so many years has been in her own person the Government of China. The private chambers of the Empress Dowager are far more luxurious than those of the puppet ruler whom she rules.

AUDIENCE-CHAMBER OF THE EMPRESS DOWAGER

Still, modest indeed are her quarters as compared with the unheard-of vastness and splendor of the seldom used ceremonial structures which we have seen. Her boudoir is a room of ordinary dimensions; her bed is in a stuffy, airless alcove; and there is in it all a musty suggestion of the "spare room" and an absence of what would be termed comfort by Europeans. The ornaments are chiefly clocks of foreign



SALON OF THE EMPRESS DOWAGER

make. Of Chinese art-objects there are some that are magnificent and some that are as tawdry as the things we see in the common shops of Peking. The only really regal thing is a broad chair or divan upholstered in Imperial yellow. Yet withal we look upon this room with an interest keener than that aroused by the most splendid of the public buildings;

COURTYARD OF THE EMPRESS DOWAGER

we realize that we are at the very heart of China, for this is the abiding-place of the controlling mind. In yonder bed the mistress of countless millions has waked as other human beings often wake to wonder and to ask, "Why am I, *I* and not another?" "How came I to be what *I* am?" On yonder divan the owner of the hugest earthly empire has

sought repose of mind, realizing as other mortals often do, the unreality of earthly things. Between these four walls has lived, loved, suffered, hated, schemed, and triumphed the woman who has proved herself stronger and greater than any man of all her nation,—a nation that doggedly clings to the belief that women have no souls.

WALLED AVENUES

We leave the Forbidden City by the same route as that taken when we entered, passing again the private gardens, the stately temple-like structures, and the many courts which lend to this Imperial abode its air of spaciousness and splendor and of mysterious remoteness from the world of ordinary men. But the mystery is gone; the spaciousness has been

THE GATE OF EXIT FROM THE FORBIDDEN CITY

THE NORTHWEST GATE

THE AMERICAN AMBULANCE

MONTANA MULES

measured and surveyed; the splendors have been catalogued, and the remoteness is appreciably reduced by the obtrusive presence of the soldier-boy from Indiana standing guard at the threshold that was once impassable.

But we must not forget that on the 17th of September, 1901, the American detachment retired from the gate and turned over to the Chinese troops the violated sanctum of

THE STONE ROAD TO THE SUMMER PALACE

A SUBURBAN VILLAGE

THE HILL OF TEN THOUSAND AGES

China, which has again become, though in a sense less absolute, "forbidden" to the foreigner. Never till war shall bring another foreign army to Peking, will foreign eyes look upon its courts and palaces, save from the distant towers of the massive city-gates, so impressively suggestive of the past strength and glory of the Manchu dynasty.

PAILOW

Even at the time of our sojourn in Peking many of the Imperial possessions were already closed to foreign curiosity —among them the celebrated Summer Palace, Yuen-ming-yuen, situated amid the foothills of a range of mountains about twelve miles to the northwest of the Capital. Fortunately, special permits are secured for us; and one glorious August

morning we start from the hotel in the Ha-Ta Street, in a vehicle that is new to the Celestial City thoroughfares; it is an army-ambulance drawn by four Montana mules, placed at our disposal by Major Robertson, the commanding officer of the American guard. We are brought in safety through several miles of the awful Peking streets, where the navigation

MER PALACE

of a high, four-wheeled craft calls for a skill in handling reins possessed only by men who learned the art of stage-driving in the far Wild West. Such a driver is old Connors. "Miraculous" is the word that best describes old Connors' cleverness in bringing us across Peking without upsetting us a dozen times. We shudder every time that we recall the

risks we ran at every one of the half-hundred right-angled turns we were obliged to make in that apparently top-heavy trap. But thanks to Connors' coolness, we slipped over slumps, slid through sloughs, dodged ditches, descended declivities, and, scaling all manner of obstructions, arrived well shaken down but right-side up at the Northwest Gate of the

THE LAKE OF THE SUMMER PALACE

Tatar town. Once outside the walls the way is clear and smooth, a marble road extending the entire distance for the comfort of the Imperial Court, which passes this way many times a year. As we roll on across the peaceful, fertile country in the swiftest vehicle in China, old Connors tells us that it was his painful duty, while serving in the Philippines

THE MARBLE BARGE

with this very ambulance, to bring back to camp the body of our gallant Lawton after he had fallen, like the true soldier that he was, in an attempt to help a wounded comrade at the front. Strange, is it not, to be whirling between the palaces of the Celestial ruler in this historic wagon, so

THE IMPERIAL BARGE

uncompromisingly American, and so strikingly out of keeping with the lovely Oriental landscape? But if the common country-side appears to us beautifully curious, what words may we use to describe the object of our outing, the Summer Palace of the Emperor of China. "Oriental," "beautiful," "fanciful," "curious," "impossible," carry

not half enough of meaning to reveal the wondrously strange charm of this world-famous site. Again the eastern adage comes to mind, "Once to see is better than a thousand tellings." Therefore let me attempt to make you see with your

A PICNIC ON THE MARBLE JUNK

own eyes the quaint details of the assembled works of man and the pure beauty of the surrounding works of Nature.

Quaintness, beauty, and wonder are everywhere combined;—witness the curious Imperial barge of marble, graceful in outline, and marvelous because it seems to float as lightly as a craft of wood upon the lovely artificial lake. Above, are grouped pagodas, temples, shrines, and summer houses. Below, their tinted forms are mirrored in the

blue; and just astern of the white marble marvel is a bridge with curving roofs of tile, unique in form, rich in color, and exquisite in workmanship. The junk, we are told, was the peace-offering of a corrupt naval official who, discovered in diverting appropriations for the building of ships into his private pocket, built for the forgiving Emperor an everlasting ship on board of which the Son of Heaven could forget his cares and, incidentally, the roguery of his officials. To-day that colossal, conspicuous bribe given by the thief to the very man whom he had robbed serves as a convenient rendezvous for picnic parties organized by visitors who have had the good fortune to obtain admission. We discuss our frugal military rations there on the marble deck of the

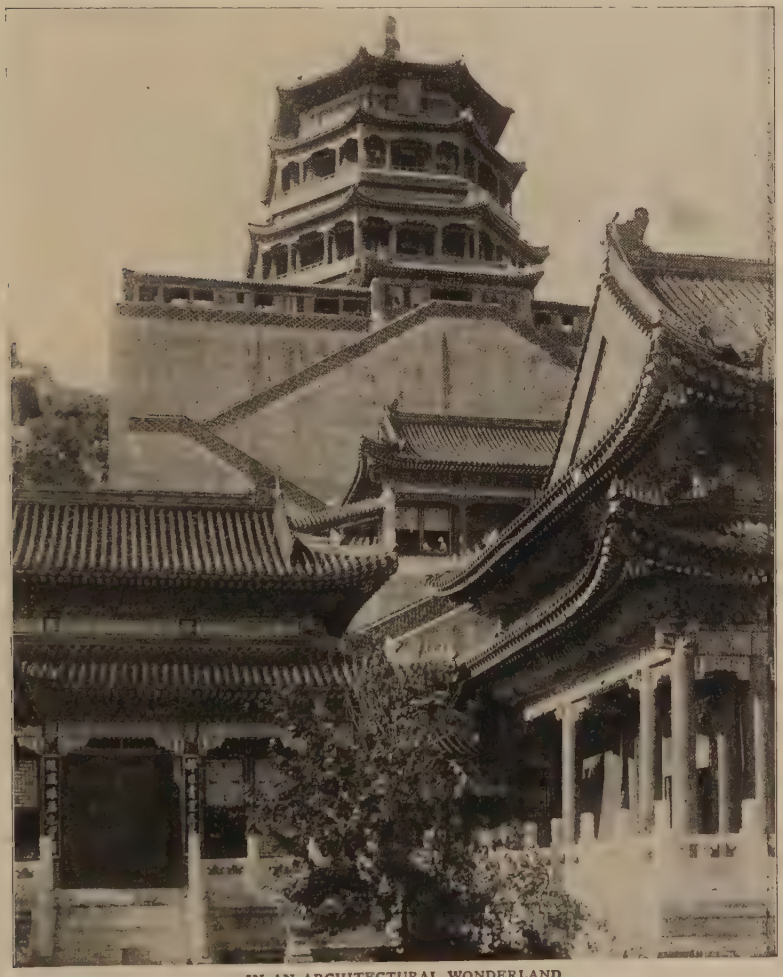
A DIP IN FORBIDDEN WATERS

Imperial barge, crowning ourselves for the occasion with gorgeous lotus-leaves culled from the lake in the course of an anteprandial excursion in a rowboat.

Then we set out to climb the famous Hill of Ten Thousand Ages, covered like the Palatine at Rome with palaces and temples. But how unlike the Roman piles are these unheard-of architectural forms! How fascinatingly foreign to the art that we inherit are the designs, the coloring, the

THE STAIRWAY

noble ensemble, and the naïve details. Confused by the multiplicity of stairways, terraced courts, and winding paths, I cannot see how best to reach the height that is our goal, and turning to our companion, a pious, learned missionary, I say, without weighing my words, "Which is the way? You have been here before; lead on, you ought to know the skyward course." His smile tells me at once that he is quite familiar with the term "sky-pilot."



IN AN ARCHITECTURAL WONDERLAND

LOOKING TOWARD PE

LOOKING TOWARD THE MOUNT

ROM THE SUMMER PALACE

ROM THE SUMMER PALACE

Breathless with admiration and with exertion, we climb the countless steps that lead up through this architectural wonderland, until we reach the topmost floor of the pagoda. There what little breath remains is taken from us as our gaze leaps out across the lake and lights upon the dainty

SOUTHWARD FROM THE PAGODA

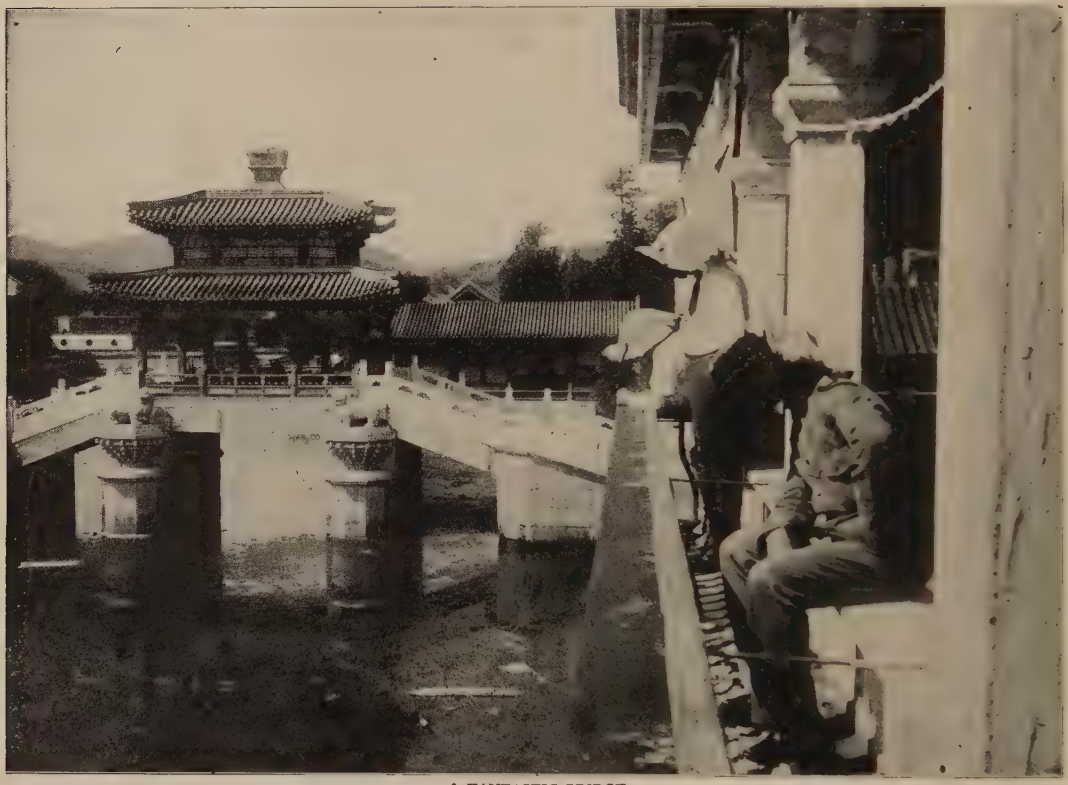
BELOW THE PORCELAIN TEMPLE

little island linked by a dainty bridge to the green fertile shore. The beauty of the scene surprises us. We pictured China as an ugly land,—a land of graceless shapes and of forbidding aspect. But where could we find hills richer in pleasing lines, greener in summer verdure, than the heights which rear themselves there in the west to shelter Peking

THE PORCELAIN TEMPLE

from the cruel winds of the adjacent Gobi Desert. We are told that far up on yonder slopes there are delightful temples, buildings which are leased every summer from the priests by the Diplomatic people, who then fly to the hills to escape dog-days in the Capital. There also on the nearer crests are the pagodas and fictitious buildings erected to

propitiate the great Earth-Dragon and the spirits of the region, to turn into fortunate channels the powerful influence of the Feng-Shui, or wind and water spirits that bless or curse the neighborhood, according to the reverence or neglect with which they may be treated by its dwellers.



A FANTASTIC BRIDGE

Looking still farther to the right, we see, crowning the Hill of the Ten Thousand Ages, the gorgeous Porcelain Temple, rival of the pagoda upon the balcony of which we stand, but hidden by it so that we did not at first observe it from below. And all these things are fresh and bright and new in aspect, for the existing structures have been reared within the last decade, replacing the earlier but no less exquisite

buildings that were destroyed by the Allies in the campaign of 1860. Within the Porcelain Temple, before the war of 1900, sat a colossal Buddha cast in bronze. It was surrounded by all the elaborate and costly paraphernalia of the Buddhist cult. To-day the interior of the temple looks as if

SPIRIT-SCARECROWS ON THE ROOFS

it had been the scene of an anarchistic outrage. The marble casements are splintered, the ornate walls are seamed and cracked, the pavement is a mass of débris, and the great Buddha, overthrown, lies almost prostrate, his outstretched finger barely touching the rear wall, as if the god in falling had in some miraculous manner saved himself from mutilation, by the outstretching of a protesting finger. All this is

THE IMPERIAL YACHT

BRONZES AND MARBLES

THE PAILOW, THE PALACE, AND THE PAGODA

the work of the Italians who have reveled in destruction here, while the English who guard another quarter have scrupulously refrained from acts of vandalism, working off their ennui, not in destroying things artistic, smashing new plate-glass windows, ruthlessly ripping out the recently

THE MARBLE BRIDGE OF THE SUMMER PALACE

installed electric wires, and making targets of the incandescent lamps, but in rigging and sailing little boats upon the peaceful lake. Tommy Atkins, if he lacks appreciation, at least has respect for art; but the art-loving sons of Italy wreak their vengeance for the deeds of Attila and his barbarians upon this unprotected earthly paradise. Happily, they did not destroy the famous curving bridge called by the ugly

name of "camel back." It deserves a fairer name, for it is the loveliest bridge in all the world. Its marble arch is unspeakably beautiful; it satisfies the eye as completely as any of the architectural creations of the past. Even the Taj Mahal and the Parthenon are not more perfect of their kind, more true to the traditions of the arts from which they sprung, and of which they are the highest, noblest products.

From every point of view, the lines of this choice creation of Chinese genius, combine to form a Chinese ideograph that should read "perfection." Let us not forget that there

THE STAIRWAY OF THE MARBLE BRIDGE

are perfect things in China. Isolation, ignorance, perversion, and superstition have submerged suffering China in a slough of despond. But from its depths, like lilies from the mire of the lotus-ponds, rise these fair reminders of a distant

THE LOTUS-LEAVES

age when China's civilization was the most perfect in the contemporary world. China merits our pity and our sympathy, not our contempt and ridicule. These misguided people of Peking, whose streets seem yet to run with blood as we retraverse them on our return (for the flooded ruts and trenches reflect the gory glare of the sunset) did but attempt to carry out what they believed to be a righteous crusade. From the darkness of their medieval minds came what

WEST

MARBLE BR

E

OF TEN THOUSAND AGES

seemed a holy inspiration to cast out "foreign devils" and to have done once and for all with these strange barbarous folk, who by force and fraud were possessing themselves of

REFLECTIONS

the Chinese seaports — sending their spies and emissaries up the courses of the Chinese rivers, and along the projected railway-routes — desecrating graves — giving offense to prejudices older than history — portioning out the empire — preparing some vast scheme for the enslavement of the Chinese people. It cannot be denied that this was the point of view of the uneducated masses. Horrible indeed the methods they employed to rid themselves of the intruders — murder of helpless children, torture of Christian women, slaughter of

unarmed men. But all this was done in the name of what they deemed religion and love of fatherland. Remember, deeds no less revolting were done in medieval Europe in the name of Christianity. China is still medieval. The Chinese believed that the Boxers were inspired religious patriots and that they were invulnerable. Many Boxers believed as absolutely in themselves as the one who allowed himself to be shot in cold blood, saying that bullets could not harm him. Others, by scores openly faced the fire from our barricades, and, armed with fans, charged into the muzzles of Mausers — not because they were brave, but because they were ignorant and superstitious — they did not *know*, and they *believed* a priestly lie.

But China has been chastised. The armies of the world have marched to Peking. Barbarity has been meted for barbarity; for every eye and tooth, ten eyes and teeth have been demanded; for every life, ten lives. Losses will be indemnified many-fold. But the real enemies, the tyrant

CELESTIAL ARCHITECTURE

masters of the Chinese multitude, the chief inciters of their passions have not yet been attacked in force. Their names are Ignorance and Superstition. While Ignorance breathes its dark breath upon the land, while Credulity haunts the yellow brain, there is no hope for China. A few valiant knights have been long in the field, the few well-armed, heroic, and broad-minded missionaries who fight under the common flag of education, spurning the vainglorious banners of sectarianism, forgetting the strife-provoking details of dogma. And until Christendom shall reinforce these noble men, that the monsters, Ignorance and Superstition, may be overcome, and that our yellow brothers may at last *know* and *think*, the duty of Christendom to China remains unfulfilled and our aggression shamefully unjustified.

La Superstition, chose affreuse,
Cette fille de Peur, cette cruelle gueuse —
L'Humanité est son ésclave,
Sauf ceux qui osent d' être brave,
Qui osent penser au lieu de croire,
Croyant que le suprême devoir
Est d' écraser ce spectre noir.

— E. Burton Holmes.

Index to This Volume

"Admiral Possiet," *pos'yet*, tow-tug on Amur River, 43-50.
"Admiral Putya tin'," post-boat on Amur River, 61-70.
Allied Armies, in China, 121, 127, 133-134, 191, 205-206.
Altar of Heaven, Peking, 245-248.
Altar of Prayer for Grain, Peking, 251-254.
Ambulance, American, in Peking, 309-313.
American Board of Foreign Missions, China:
  Destruction of Peking mission, 182.
  Visit to missionary, 172, 177-182.
Amur River, *ah moor'*, trip down:
  "Admiral Possiet," tow-tug, 43-50.
  "Admiral Putyatin," post-boat, 61-70.
  "Aurora," barge, 41-66.
  Blagoveschensk, 41-42, 71, 77.
  "Burning Mountains," 70.
  Freight barge utilized for passengers, 82-87.
  Khabarovsk, 93-95.
  Lamp-lighters, 93.
  Mail-service, 78-88.
  Monotony, four weeks of, 91-94.
  "Nitchevo", Russian indifference, 63-64, 82.
  "Nitchevo, Mr.", typical Siberian man of affairs, 70-71, 84.
  Perricatts, sand-bars, 21-29, 35.
  Plott, river raft, 9-10, 22.
  Pokrovka, 35-36, 39-40.
  Polish gentleman, 56-61, 95-97.
  Professor from St. Petersburg, 9, 14, 91.
  Schoolboy from San Francisco, encountered on journey, 24-26.
  Shilka and Argun Rivers, meeting to form Amur, 10, 13, 33.
  Time employed in journey, 91-94.
  Uninhabited shores and islands, 93.
Ants, resemblance of Chinese to, 135.
Architecture, Chinese, 245-248, 251-253, 271-275, 314-317, 329-330.
Argun River, *ahr goon'*, meeting with Shilka to form Amur River, 10, 13, 33.
Armies, allied, in China. See *China*.
Arts and Artists, China, 252-253, 289-290, 301, 314.
Asia, Cossack invasion, 112.
"Aurora," barge on Amur River:
  Collision with tow-tug threatened, 49-50.
  Difficulties of towing down-stream, 41-49.
  Exchange of passengers with post-boat, 61, 66.
  Monotonous delays, 50-56.
  Polish gentleman's escape in row-boat, 56-61.
"Bambooing," punishment for a Chinese malefactor, 138.
Barge, imperial, Peking, 314-316.
Blagoveschensk, *bla go vaysh' chensk*, Siberia:
  Boxer outbreak, cruelty of Russian governor to Chinese, 77.
  Hotel kept by Frenchman, 71.
  Limit of low water on Amur River, 41-42.
  Metropolis of the Amur, 71.
Boxers:
  Belief in personal safety, 337.
  Blagoveschensk, cruelty of Russian governor, 77.
  Destruction along line of Peking railway, 148-151.
  Mission in Peking, destruction by, 182.
  Provisional government during the rebellion, 127, 137-138.
  Rebellion, 117.
  Siege of legations at Peking, 206-216.
Bridges, Peking summer palace, 258-261, 329-330.
Buddhism, in China, 183-185, 325.
Camels, Mongolian, 191, 242.
Cathedral, siege of French cathedral, in Peking, 219-223.
Chaffee, General, in China, 140.
Chairs:
  Imperial chair of Chinese majesty, 239.
  Street chairs, 191.
Chi-fu, *chee foo'*, Chinese port, 118.
China:
  Agricultural pursuits, 155.
  Allied armies, 121, 127, 133-134, 191, 205-206.
  Altar of Heaven, 245-248.
  Altar of Prayer for Grain, 251-254.
  American Board of Foreign Missions, 172, 177-182.
  Ants, resemblance of Chinese to, 135.
  Architecture, 245-248, 251-253, 271-275, 314-317, 329-330.

Art, 252-253, 289-290, 301, 314.
Boxers. See that title.
Buddhism, 183-185, 325.
Camels, 191, 242.
Chaffee, General, in China, 140.
"Changee dollar," 152.
Chi-fu, port, 118.
Confucianism, influence of, 185.
Dignity of Chinese, 147-148.
Dragon throne. See that title.
Emperor. See *China, Emperor of.*
Empress of China, 241, 296-302.
Feet of women, 185-189.
Forbidden City. See that title.
Junks, 147.
Li Hung Chang, residence of, Tien-Tsin, 137.
Manchuria, 101-102, 76-77.
Monocacy, U. S. S. at Taku, 124, 127.
Pawnshops, 167-168, 195-196.
Pe-chi-li, gulf of, 118.
Pei-Ho River. See that title.
Peking. See that title.
Pigtails, 186.
Priests, 183-184.
Provisional government, during the Boxer troubles:
Bambooing malefactor, 138.
Li Hung Chang's residence, occupation, 137.
Ships licensed, 127.
Railways, 131-133, 145-153, 224, 241.
Religion, 183-185.
Salt, imperial tribute, 141.
Taku. See that title.
Taoism, 185.
Telegraph, 134.
Temples. See that title.
Tien-Tsin. See that title.
Toil, characteristic of China, 134-135.
Tonku. See that title.
Tradition, thraldom of, 185, 335-336.
Vagueness, Chinese characteristic, 257.
Western civilization, 116-117, 294-295.
Women in China, 185-189.
China, Emperor of:
Clocks, passion for, 296.
Dragon throne. See that title.
Dwelling place and gardens, 295-297.
Following the plow, 255.
Train, private, 163.
China, Empress of:
Dwelling place, 296-302.
Railway construction, prohibited, 241.
Clocks, China, Emperor of, passion for clocks, 296.
Coal:
Amur River, "burning mountains," 70.
Hill of, Peking, 262.
Confucianism, influence of, in China, 185.
Congér, U. S. minister to China, influence during Peking siege, 213.
Connors, stage-driver in Peking, 309-313.
Convicts, Siberia, on prison barges, 74-75.
Cossacks, *kos'saks:*
Occupation of Manchuria, 76.
Yermak, invader of Asia, 112.
Down the Amur. See *Amur River.*
Dragon Throne, of Peking:
Approach to, 267-289.
Axis of dual city, 231, 235, 268.
Description of throne, 284-290.
Hoosier sentry, 278, 306.
Tea served to visitors, 280.
Driver, Connors, in Peking, 309-313.
Dust, yellow, Peking, 153, 161, 163, 170.
Eunuchs, guarding dragon throne at Peking, 279-280, 284.
Feet, of Chinese women, 185-189.
Forbidden City, Peking:
Center of imperial plan. 115, 228-232.
Circuit of, 232.
Courts and portals, 271-288.
Dragon throne. See that title.
Emperor's private gardens and dwellings, 295-297.
Eunuchs guarding throne, 279-280, 284.
Hall of Highest Peace, 239.
Mystery no longer, 265, 302.
Neutral territory between American and Chinese lines, 279-280.
Parks, 232, 253-254, 258.
Portals guarding the approach, 271-288.
Retirement of foreign soldiers, 306-308.
View of, from Hill of Coal, 262-265.
"Foreign Devils," China's crusade against, 331-335.
Forests, Shilka River, smoke of burning forests, 22, 34, 39.
Fourth of July, Stryetensk banquet, Siberia, 9.

France:
Cathedral at Peking, siege of, 219-223.
Redoubtable, warship at Taku, 121.
"Fu," *foo*, or palace, occupied by American missions board at Peking, 177-181.
Funerals, Peking procession, 164, 193.
Germany, minister to China, assassination of, 223.
Great Britain:
Legation at Peking, siege of, 214.
Military occupation of temple, Peking, 242-245.
Gulf of Pe-chi-li, *pay chee lee'*, China, 118.
Gypsies, Pokrovka encampment, 36.
Hair and Hair-Dressing, Chinese, 189.
Hill of Coal, Peking, 262.
Hill of Ten Thousand Ages, Peking, 316-329.
Hoosier Sentry, Dragon Throne, Peking, 278, 306.
Hotels:
Blagovenschensk, 71.
Peking, 164, 169.
Tien-Tsin, 142.
Tonku, 128, 131.
House-Boats, "tracked" up Pei-Ho River, 146-147.
Italian Soldiers, vandalism in Peking, 325, 329.
Jinrik'ishas:
German soldiers' brutality to rikisha men, 167.
Peking experiences, 161, 172-182, 190, 251.
Pony-rigged rikisha, 192.
Tien-Tsin, 143.
Junks, Pei-Ho River:
"Tracked" by coolies, 147.
Under foreign flags, 127.
Khabarovsk, *kah bah'rofsk*, Siberia, 93-95.
Lake, of lotus, Peking, 258-261.
Lamp-lighters, on Amur River, 93.
Lawton, rescue of body by Connor's ambulance, 313.
Legations, at Peking, siege of, 206-223.
"Lest we forget," traced on Peking wall, 214.
Li Hung Chang, *lee hoong chang*, residence of, Tien-Tsin, 137.
"Lily Feet" of Chinese women, 185-186.
Liscum, Col., at Tien-Tsin, 144-145.
Loot, Peking, 167-168.
Lotus Lake, Peking, 158-261.
Mail, service on Amur River, 78-88.
Manchu Women, 156, 186-189.
Manchuria, *man choo'ri ah*:
Aurora moored to shore, 55.
Railway, 101-102.
"Rurik," approach on Shilka River, 34.
Russian temporary occupation, 76-77.
Missions, American Board of Foreign, 172, 177-182.
"Monocacy," *moh nok'a see*, U. S. S. at Taku, 124-127.
Motion Photography, Russians interested in machine, 51.
Mountains, burning mountains of the Amur River, 70.
Mules, from Montana, Peking, 309.
Navy. See *Warships*.
Newspapers, Peking:
Courtesy of correspondent, 201.
Oldest newspaper in the world, Peking Gazette, 202.
State of journalism, 202.
School-boy from San Francisco sent around the world, 24-26.
Nikolsko'ye, important milestone of Russian advance in east, 101-102.
Ninth Infantry, U. S. in China:
Fall of, at Tien-Tsin, 144-145.
Occupation of Temple of Agriculture at Peking, 255.
Successors to Chinese Imperial Guard, 265-267.
"Nitchevo," Russian expression of indifference, 63-64, 82.
"Nitchevo, Mr." typical Siberian man-of-affairs, 70, 84.
Pacific Ocean, first view of, 102-106.
Pailows, *py'loo*, memorial arches in Peking, 191, 223.
Palaces:
Forbidden City. See that title.
"Fu," occupied as missionaries, 177-181.
Summer Palace, Peking. See that title.
Parks, of Forbidden City, Peking, 232, 254-258.
Pawnshops, Peking, 195-196.
Passports, to visit Forbidden City, 256-257.
Pe-chi-li, *pay chee lee'*, gulf of, 118.
Pei-Ho River, *pay hoh'*:
Forts protecting entrance, 122-124.
Junks, 147.
Salt mounds, 141.
U. S. S. Monocacy and other foreign ships in the river, 124-127.

Pei Tang, *pay tang,* French cathedral and mission at Peking, siege of, 219-223.
Peking, *pee king'*:
Agriculture, temple of, 255.
Altar of Heaven, most sacred in China, 242-248.
Altar of Prayer for grain, 251-254.
Ambulance, American, 309-313.
American Board of Foreign Missions, 172, 177-182.
Arches, memorial, 191, 293.
Barge, imperial, of marble, 314-316.
Blue tiled temple, 245.
Bridges, 258-261, 329-330.
Buddha, Peking statues, 184, 325.
Camels in streets, 191, 242.
Carts, discomforts of, 155-160, 189.
Chien-men street and gate, 161-163.
Chinese city, 233, 242.
Compound of Hotel du Nord, 168-169.
Confucius, temple of, 185.
Conger, U. S. Minister, influence during siege, 213.
Connors, stage-driver from Wild West, 309-313.
Contrasts of beauty and ugliness, 227, 257.
Dinner at a native restaurant, 199-200.
Dragon throne. See that title.
Dust, yellow haze of, 153, 161, 163, 170.
Forbidden City. See that title.
"Foreign Devils," crusade against, 331-335.
French cathedral and mission during siege, 219-223.
"Fu," or palace, occupied by American Board of Foreign Missions, 177-181.
Funeral procession, 164, 193.
Garrisons of foreign nations in legation quarter, 224.
German minister, assassination of, 223.
German soldiers' brutality to rikisha men, 167.
Ha-ta street and gate, 164, 223, 242.
Hall of Highest Peace, 239.
Hill of Coal, 262.
Hill of Ten Thousand Ages, 316-329.
Hospitality of Chinese merchant, 195-201.
Hotel du Nord, 164-169.
Isolation of altars and temples, 254.
Lake of Lotus and Marble Bridge, 258-261.
Lama temple, 184.
Legation guards in foreign quarter, 224-255.
Legation street, 164, 210, 255.
Legations, foreign, siege of, 206-223.
"Lest we forget," traced on wall of British legation, 214.
Loot, 167-168.
Luncheon on marble barge of Summer Palace, 315.
Manchu women, 156, 186-189.
Marble barge, 314.
Mines, explosion of subterranean, 222.
Mission, American, destruction of, during Boxer outbreak, 182.
Mission, French Catholic during siege, 219-223.
Mules, from Montana, 309.
Name of the city, spelling and pronunciation, 154.
"Navigation" of streets by night, 174.
Newspaper, Peking Gazette, 202.
Night ride through the city, 171-177.
Pailows, memorial arches, 191, 223.
Palaces. See that title.
Pawnshops, 167-168, 195-196.
Pei Tang, French Cathedral, 219-223.
Plan of city, 227-233.
Polyglot speech, 154-155.
Port of. See *Taku.*
Privileges of rikisha-men, 251.
Proclamations on the walls, 202-206.
Property loss during siege, 215.
Railways, 131-133, 145-153, 224, 241.
Reminders of siege, 223-224.
Restaurant, 199-200.
Robertson, Major, commanding officer of American guard, 256, 309.
Safety of foreigners after siege, 171, 210.
Seymour, Admiral, march on Peking, 148, 151.
Siege of foreign legations and missions, 206-223.
Signboards, 154, 161.
Sisters of Mercy, 219-223.

Soda-water signs, 161.
Soldiers. See that title.
South Gate, 152.
Streets and street-life, 161, 170-177, 189-192, 309.
Summer Palace. See that title.
Taku, port of Peking. See that title.
Tartar City:
Lama Temple, 184.
Manchu quarter, 232.
Railway station, 224, 240.
Yang, merchant of foreign goods, 194.
Temples. See that title.
Theater scenes, 192-193.
Throne, imperial, 239.
Train, Emperor's private, 163.
Trans-continental railway terminal, 241.
Universe, center of, 248.
Vistas in Imperial park, 258, 262, 267.
Walls of medieval masonry, 152-153, 239.
Yang, I. C., Chinese merchant, 194-195.
"Peking Gazette," oldest newspaper in the world, 202.
Penal Settlements, Saghalien, 74-76.
Perricatts, *pair ri kat'*, in the Shilka River, 21-29, 35.
Photography, incidents, 49-51, 109-110.
Pierre Loti, courtesy of, in harbor of Taku, 121.
Pig-tail, imposed on Chinese by Mongols, 186.
Plott, or raft, on Amur River, 9-10, 22.
Pokrovka, *po kroff'kah*, Siberian town, 35-40.
Post-boats, Amur River:
"Admiral Putyatin," 61-70.
Boat-decks sheltered by trees, 88-90.
Shilka River boat, 30, 40.
"Siever," passengers and mailbags, 78-83.
Posters, of allied armies, Peking, 205-206.
Priests, Chinese, 183-184.
Professor, Russian, services of, 9, 14, 91.
Queue, Chinese, imposed by Mongol conquerors, 186.
Railways:
Manchurian railway, 101-102.
Peking:
Entrance into city, 152-153.
Line from Tongky British control, 131-133.
Scenes by the way, 145-152.
Station, 153, 224, 241.
Siberia:
Trans-Siberian Railway, 5-6, 108.
Ussuri Railway, 93, 97.
"Redoubtable," French warship at Taku, 121.
Religion, Chinese, 183-185, 325.
Restaurants, Peking, dining at one of surviving restaurants, 199-200.
Robertson, Major, commanding officer of American guard, Peking, 256, 309.
"Rurik," *roo'rik*, steamer on Amur River:
Accommodations, 10-11, 15.
Arrival at Stryetensk, 10.
China, approaching edge of, 34.
Crew, 16-18.
Good-by, 41.
Halts at night, incidents of, 16.
"Machine of high pressure," 11-12.
Passengers, 11-15.
Smoke, obscures views, 22, 34.
Soundings, 21, 29-30, 34-35.
Russia:
Chinese boundaries, Russian occupation, 76-77, 101-102.
Eastward advance of Russian dominion, 76, 101-102, 112.
Race mixtures, in eastern empire, 1-2.
Yermak, Cossack, invader of, 112.
Saghalien, *sah gah leen'* Russian penal settlement, 74, 76.
St. Petersburg, distance from Vladivostok, 108.
Salt, Chinese imperial tribute at Tien-Tsin, 139-141.
San Francisco, schoolboy from, encountered on Shilka River, 24-26.
Seymour, Admiral, march on Peking, 148, 151.
Shilka River, *shil'kah*:
Bathing in, 16.
Excursion on barks, 29-30.
Forest, burning, smoke of, 22, 34, 39.
Laundry on bank, 22.
Low water season, emigrants and travelers stranded, 5-10, 39.
Meeting with Argun to form Amur River, 10, 13, 133.
Perricatt, boats sitting on, 21-29.
Post boats, 30, 40.

"Rurik," steamer. See that title.
Siberia:
Amur River. See that title.
Argun River, 10, 13, 33.
Blagoveschensk. See that title.
Colonization along Ussuri railway route, 98, 101.
Convicts, in prison barges, 74-75.
Foreigners developing new country, 71-74.
Gypsies at Pokrovka, 36.
Land of promise instead of land of prisons, 76.
"Mr. Nitchevo," typical man-of-affairs, 70, 84.
Nikolskoye, important milestone of Russian advancement, 101-102.
Pacific Ocean, first view of, 102-106.
Pokrovka, town, 35-40.
Race mixtures on border of empire, 102.
Railways, 5-6, 93-97, 108.
Saghalien, penal settlement, 74-76.
Shilka River. See that title.
Stigma removed from, 76.
Stryetensk, 5-10.
Trans-Siberian Railway, 5-6, 108.
Vladivostok. See that title.
Siege, of foreign legations at Peking, 206-224.
"Siever," *zee'fer*, post-boat on Amur River, 78-83.
Sisters of Mercy, at Peking during siege, 219-223.
"Sky Pilot," at Summer Palace, Peking, 317.
Soldiers:
Allied Armies, 121, 127, 133-134, 191, 205-206.
German regiment at Tongku, 132.
German soldiers' brutality to rikisha men, 167.
Italian soldiers, vandalism of, 325, 329.
Russian, at Vladivostok, 111-112.
"Tommy Atkins," 134, 248, 329.
Uniforms in Peking, 191.
Stryetensk, *stree ay'tensk*, Siberian town, 5-10.
Summer Palace, Peking:
Architectural wonderland, 320-324.
Bridges:
Curving, 329-330.
Marble, 258-261.
Buddha, statue, 325.
Hill of Ten Thousand Ages, 316-324.
Marble barge, 314-316.
Porcelain Temple, 324-329.
Route, incidents of, 308-313.
Sky-pilot as guide, 317.
"Tommy Atkins," good behavior of, 329.
Vandalism of Italian soldiers, 325, 329.
Superstition, poem, 336.
Taku, *ta koo'*, port of Peking:
Arrival at sunrise, 118.
Forts, seizure by Allies, 122-123.
Hopeless appearance of town, 124.
Landing, difficulties of, 122.
Warships of allied powers in harbor, 118-121, 124-127.
Taoism, *tou'ism*, in China, 185.
Tea-drinking, Peking:
Dragon Throne room, tea served, 280.
Yang, Mr., tea at house of, 195.
Telegraphs, Peking lines in control of allied powers, 134.
Temples, Peking:
Agriculture, temple of, 255.
Blue tiled temple, 245.
Confucius, temple of, 185.
Lama temple, 184.
Porcelain temple, 324-329.
Temple of Heaven, 153, 242, 245.
Theaters, scenes in, Peking, 192.
Tien-Tsin, *teen tsin'*:
Approach, desolation of, 133.
Chaffee, Gen., attitude in China, 140.
Foreign occupation, 136.
Hotel des Colonies, French quarter, 142.
Li Hung Chang, residence of, 137.
Liscum, Col., scene of fall, 144-145
Ninth Infantry, fall of, 144-145.
Policed by foreign troops, 135.
Population, comparative size, 136-137.
Reign of terror ended by foreign troops, 144.
Rikisha men, 143.
Salt of the earth, imperial tribute, 139-141.
Siege of British quarter, 143.
Street levels, neglect of, 138-139.
Toil, characteristic of Chinese, 134-135.
Two cities, Chinese and international, 141-144.
"Tommy Atkins," in China, 134, 248, 329.
Tongku, *tong koo*:
Allied armies, beginning of exodus, 133.
Arrest of travelers threatened, 131-132.
German regiment, arrival, 132.

Hotel Tivoli, 128, 131.
Railway terminus of line to Peking, 131.
Tow-tug, Admiral Possiet, on Amur river, 43-50.
Trans-Siberian Railway, 5-6, 108.
Uniforms, of allied armies, Peking, 191.
United States:
Legation at Peking, siege of, 206-213.
Monocacy, U. S. S. at Taku, 124-127.
Ninth Infantry in China. See that title.
Universe, center of, Peking, 248.
Ussuri, *oo soo'ree,* railway, Siberia, 93, 97.
Vladivostok, *vlah dee vos tok',* Siberia:
Arrival at, 106-107.
Distance from St. Petersburg, 108.
Fogs, 110.
Harbor and ships, 109.
New buildings, 110.
Soldiers singing, 111-112.
Terminus of Ussuri railway, 93, 98.
Warships:
"Monocacy," U. S. S., at Taku, 124-127.
"Redoubtable," at Taku, 121.
Taku, warships of allied powers, 118-120.
Vladivostok, Russian squadron, 109.
Washing Day, on the "Redoubtable," 121.
Women, Chinese, 185-189.
Yamun, *yah'moon,* of Li Hung Chang, 137.
Yang, I. C., merchant at Peking, 94, 195.
Yermak, *yer mahk',* Cossack invader of Asia, 112.

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